

**A CRITICAL STUDY AND EVALUATION OF THE  
TEACHING OF ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
IN SAUDI ARABIA, WITH REFERENCE TO  
TEXTBOOK ANALYSIS**

Mohammed Suleiman Nasban

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**A CRITICAL STUDY AND EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING OF  
ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN SAUDI ARABIA,  
WITH REFERENCE TO TEXT BOOK ANALYSIS**

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Submitted for the degree of Ph. D in the Faculty of arts in  
the University of St. Andrews

September, 1990





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## ABSTRACT

Teaching Arabic as foreign language is a fairly new field of study, particularly in Western Universities. The aim of this thesis is to discuss one aspect of this field by concentrating on text-book analysis and evaluation. In carrying out this task we have formulated a set of questions to serve as parameters in the collection and analysis of data relevant to this task (appendix II). The subject of this practical study is vol. 1, entitled " Arabic for Beginners " of a series of books used for teaching Arabic to foreign adults at the Arabic Language Institute. Our study utilises a number of notions and considerations which are applicable to text-book analysis and evaluation generally. In Appendix I we deal with some of these points in an attempt to specify the theoretical dimension presupposed by our practical analysis.

The thesis contains two main parts:- the theoretical part which deals with different aspects belonging to the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, including the characteristics of the Arabic language and the teaching of sounds, vocabulary, constructions, and culture. The practical part, on the other hand, is concerned with the practical application and the outcome of the analysis of the text-book in terms of a set of criteria which may have

applicability outside the immediate realm of Arabic foreign language teaching.

The thesis contains four chapters. Chapter one deals with the characteristics of the Arabic language and its importance as a foreign language; it also concentrates on the objectives of Arabic language teaching as well as on the problem of syllabus design in relation to this language. Chapter two gives a general outline of the institutes and the materials of teaching Arabic as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia. Chapter three deals with the importance of sounds, vocabulary, constructions and culture, paying attention to their place in the text-book of teaching Arabic as a foreign Language. Chapter four sets out the results of applying the criteria of text-book evaluation to the book under investigation, pointing out its positive and negative features in the areas of sounds, vocabulary, constructions and culture.

# TRANSLITERATION

ا	ʾ
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	h
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	c
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
ة	a
و	w
ي	y

## Short vowels

ـَ	a
ـُ	u
ـِ	i

## Long vowels

اَ	ā
اِ	ʾā
وُ	ū
يِ	ī

## Diphthongs

اَوْ	au
اِي	ai

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF ARABIC AND TEACHING IT TO NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS**

Arabic, like many other languages, is characterised by significant qualities. Arabic is a deep-rooted Semitic language which played a great role in preserving Arabic tradition before and after the advent of Islam. In the Jahiliyyah, before Islam, there was that eloquent Arabic tongue which the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula possessed and used in oratory, writing poetry and expressing their proverbs and maxims. The Jahiliyyah poetry, in particular, played an important part in preserving the language and its nature. Then Islam came, and the Qur'an was revealed in the same language - a fact which securely safeguarded and preserved it from that period to our present day. It remained over the ages the greatest of all Semitic languages and the most successful in maintaining its qualities. Reference may be made in this context to Ferguson (1971:182) who points

out that Arabic is "the most important Semitic language today".

Arabic enjoys a number of diverse characteristics which denote its greatness. There are, for instance, the phonetic, syntactic, morphological and rhetorical (stylistic) characteristics which complement one another, accentuating its distinctive identity. Yushman (1961:4) believes that "Arabic stands out among the Semitic languages because of its richer sound system, an exceptional development of forms and vocabulary and an astounding propensity for set patterns of word formation and word change which makes Arabic grammar look (algebraic) as some scholars put it and sometimes gives an impression of artificiality".

Arabic is distinguished by the wideness of its vocal spectrum which enables it to produce a great number of different sounds. Frequently one feels that there are similarities between certain sounds, but on close examination, one discovers the presence of distinctions between them. This situation is epitomised by the resemblance between

"س" (s) and "ص" (s), on the one hand, and between "ط" (t), "ت" and "د", on the other. The close similarities between the aforementioned sounds give rise to the problem of teaching them to non-Arabic speakers who either mispronounce them, confuse the one for the other, or hear them as analogous sounds. It is here that the role of the teacher and the author of



the book is crucial to highlighting the differences between these sounds.

Among the other characteristics of Arabic is "case endings" which term could be understood as implying the assignment of vowels over the letters for the sake of precisely determining the syntactical function of words so that the meaning becomes clear and well-understood. This phenomenon is undoubtedly one of the significant features of Arabic, as its absence renders the identification of the "subject" and the "object" in each of the following sentences extremely difficult, if not entirely impossible, e.g.

(إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللَّهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ)

(وَإِذَا ابْتَلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ رَبَّهُ )

Even if we consider the structure (form) of the verb in Arabic, we notice that it takes many different forms. To put it differently, it is possible in Arabic to extract a large number of forms from a single verb. However, so long as the ultimate aim of our research is to present Arabic to the non-Arabic speaker in a lucid and easy fashion, the foregoing quality may serve the purposes of teaching the student how to deduce numerous forms which he could make use of in his writing and speech. It should be taken into account in this context that numerous verbal forms could confuse the student unless adequately drilled.

One of the other distinctive characteristics of Arabic is "derivation" which is, a regular and effective method of creating a wealth of vocabulary, for writing and speaking. One should also warn here that filling the school text-book with numerous derived words could have a negative effect, which may outdo the positive aspect, especially in the early stages of learning Arabic. It should, however, also be pointed out that failure to clarify the essence of derivation and its significance to the learner could cause him to miss an effective means of increasing his wealth of vocabulary

The aim of discussing some of the characteristic features of Arabic at this stage is not to talk extensively about the nature of those qualities, but only to emphasise that those qualities might be manipulated for improving the teaching process. However, the lack of skilful knowledge in how to present these features in a sound efficient and correct manner might lead to errors either in use of the language, or in the techniques of learning it. We find, for example, that one single letter may change the meaning of a word. The teacher, or the book, may introduce the word " قسط الرجل " instead of " أقسط " in a sentence like " قسط الرجل " means " to be just " while intending to say " أقسط الرجل " which means "to attack violently, or to

be oppressive". A single letter, as we have already seen, may prevent the foreign learner from distinguishing the two words, to the extent that he may tend to use the one wrongly for the other. Differences of this nature are common in Arabic, e.g. "أقام", "قام", "أنذر", "نذر", "أوعد", "وعد", etc., and the teacher and the school textbook must be cautious when introducing them.

Among the other distinguishing qualities of Arabic which both the school textbook and the teacher must take into account is that a single letter may, in certain cases, refer to a number of different meanings. Let us select, for the sake of exemplification, the letter "لام" which may indicate the following:-

- |                                |                           |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Corroboration: as in saying | ان زيدا قائم              |
| 2. Wonder : as in saying       | يا لشجاعة الرجل           |
| 3. Imperative : as in saying   | ليعرف كل منا مكانه        |
| 4. Reason : as in God's saying | ( إنما نطعمكم لوجه الله ) |

These issues may not be clear in the foreign student's mind, even at the advanced levels where they are supposed to be taught.

One further important characteristic of Arabic is the "declension patterns". There are declension patterns which rhyme with "فعاله" and which indicate "profession", e.g. "ملاحه", "صحافه", "زراعه", etc. and other

declension patterns of the type "فعلان" imply "fluctuation and confusion", "طيران", "خفقان", "غشيان", etc. There are also patterns of the types "فعل" and "فعال" as in "مرض", "سقام", and "جزام". Verbal nouns (i.e. infinitive nouns) in Arabic which correspond with declension patterns like "فعال" and "فعل" denote "high voice", e.g. "صراخ", "نواح", "عويل", and "صهيل", etc. The verbal noun (i.e. infinitive noun) which rhyme with "فعل" may occasionally be used to refer to the idea of "motion", as when they say "رحيل" and "دبيب".

Some of the quadriliteral verbal nouns (i.e. infinitive nouns) denote "repetition", as in "زعزعه", "جرجره", and "ثرثره", and others point out to the "mode of the act", as in "جلسه" and "قتله", which rhyme with the pattern "فعله". These patterns, among others, are specific tools for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, especially at the advanced levels, providing they are presented in an organised, logical reasonable way.

"Substitution" is also one of the qualities of Arabic which the author of a book for teaching the language to non-Arabic speakers must be particularly aware of. The phenomenon of substituting one word for another is common and well-established in Arabic. It is possible in the language for example to substitute the verbal noun (i.e. infinitive noun) for a verb, as in saying "إسمع النصيح", "سماعا النصيح" meaning "hear the advice",

or " صبرا آل ياسر " meaning " إصبروا " "be patient, endure". It is also possible to substitute the subject for the verbal noun (i.e. infinitive noun) as in God's saying ( ليس لوقعتها كاذبه ) meaning " تكذيب ", "denial", and to substitute the object for the subject (i.e. agent) as in " حجاباً مستورا " meaning " سائر " "(covering) screen". Given the significance of these issues, one should be careful not to underestimate the difficulties which the non-Arab learners of Arabic are bound to encounter, therefore one should expect errors in these areas.

Among the other qualities which could be used as contributory factors for facilitating the understanding of the meaning of words is the use of certain letters as indicators of meaning. ( الخصائص ) ابن جنى, for instance, observed that whenever specific letters occur in identified places in the word, they suggest a certain meaning. When the letter " ت " (t), for example, occurs as the second letter in the word, then it signifies " القطع ", e.g. " بتر العضو " and " بت الجبل ", etc. If the letter " غ " (gh) occurs at the beginning of the word, it indicates " الاستتار والظلمه " ( concealment and darkness ) as in " غابت الشمس ", " غاص الماء " and " غطس السباح ". By the same token, when the letter " ن " (nuun) occurs at the beginning of the word, it designates " الظهور والبروز " (to become manifest or protrude), e.g. " نضح ", " نبت ", etc.

The teacher or the author of a school textbook must concentrate on elucidating the phenomenon of "abbreviation and abridgement" in Arabic. The "doubling or gemination" phenomenon, for example, refers to the process of fusing two letters and creating a single long letter, e.g. "كسر", "شد", and "مد". There is also the extra phenomenon of inserting or amalgamating sounds in one another, as when we say "سررت مما قلت" and "سئمت مما تفعلون" which are originally "من ما قلت" and "من ما تفعلون".

Moreover, within the scope of the abbreviation phenomenon in Arabic lies the possibility of eliding a whole sentence in cases where no ambiguity is involved, as when asking somebody "كيف أصبحت" and receiving the answer "بخير", which means "أصبحت بخير" "I woke up fine", or when saying to someone "أهنته وهو كبير في السن" and receiving the answer "وإن", which means "وإن كان كذلك" meaning "even if he was so!". These rhetorical issues require not only precision of selection, but also clear and imaginative ways of presenting them to the students, because they represent usage at advanced levels of the language.

"Metaphor", which is considered to be one of the characteristics of Arabic, poses a difficulty not only to non-Arab learners, but also to the Arab students themselves. One type of metaphor, for instance, involves the use of a word outside its ordinary context for the purpose of conveying a different

meaning, e.g. God says ( يَنْزِلُ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ رِزْقًا ) , where " رِزْقًا " means " مطرًا " ; or when He says ( إِنِّي أُرَانِي أُعْصِرُ خُمْرًا ) , where " خُمْرًا " means " عنبًا " , etc.

The distinctive characteristics of Arabic must be crystal-clear in the mind of the author who writes a specific school text-book for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. I have actually discovered from my personal experiences in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers of different nationalities that there are issues which constitute difficulties for the majority of learners. Among these, I can refer to the subject of "number". The rule dictates that we must put the numeral in the masculine gender if the countable noun is feminine, e.g. " خمس طالبات " , and make the numeral feminine if the countable noun is masculine, e.g. " اربعة رجال " . We also put the countable noun, if it is between "three" to "ten", in the plural, e.g. " عشرة أطفال " , and we put it in the singular when it accompanies one thousand" and "thousands", e.g. " الف طالب " and " عشرة آلاف طالب " .

Other issues which could pose problems in learning Arabic as a foreign (second) language include, for instance, diminutives, relation (kinship), doubling shortened and protracted nouns, broken plurals, forms of verbal nouns, etc.

Among the suggestions which could be taken into account when

writing a special school textbook for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers are the following:-

1. Distinguishing between long and short vowels which so frequently lead to confusion and embarrassment.
2. Paying attention to the sun (solar) and moon (lunar) letters and distinguishing between them.
3. Benefiting from the derivation phenomenon without being excessive in overgenerating derivatives.
4. Benefiting from the phenomenon of synonym to increase the oral wealth and carefully maintaining the differences in meaning.
5. A special method should be adopted to present the verbs in Arabic since they take many different forms and may confuse the foreign learners on first encounter. One may suggest to start with the perfect forms, followed by the imperfect forms, and then the imperative forms. Alternatively, it is also possible to start with imperative form of the verb which, in this case, could be easily practised in the classroom, whereby the teacher would order the student to do something, e.g. " **إفتح الباب** " meaning "open the door!", etc. However, irrespective of the philosophical basis on which the book has been built, the presence of an obvious methodology (system) whereby the



learner can easily follow up the sections of the book is highly recommended.

6. The theoretical aspects of Arabic are of great importance. Frequently Arabic language books abound in images of creativity and imagination which point out the refined nature (sophistication) of the language and the profusion (extent) of its oral wealth. Care is required in this sphere since the manipulation of rhetorical images in the early stages of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers may create a problem for the learners. If the difficulty of translating Arabic rhetorical structures is not taken into account, the student will be incapable of appreciating the source of beauty in them.

## **1.2 THE OBJECTIVES OF TEACHING ARABIC**

### **AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

There is no doubt that the final outcome of any project partly depends on the objectives of its planners. Success in fulfilling the stated objectives often depends on the effort given to making the objectives as clear as possible.

This is particularly true in the field of teaching. It is impossible for one to plan or evaluate teaching without reference to objectives. It is plain to all that in teaching a foreign language, achieving linguistic and communicative competence in the target language is the ultimate objective. But many other subsidiary objectives are also involved in this process. These relate to all engaged in aspects of learning: the student, teacher, author, and the interaction of these in the language teaching/learning process.

Therefore, only when the objectives have been clearly defined can the scholar establish the values that lie behind them. In this respect, White (1988:31) claims that "objectives are the consequences of values and it is these values themselves that need to be revealed when previously they may have been concealed".

It is important to mention that objectives require a rational and dynamic basis, taking into account the involvement of students, teachers, the community, as well as the professionals.

Since the book serves as a constant companion to both teacher and student, text-books for teaching a foreign language, in particular, ought to present and apply the objectives systematically and carefully.

Text-book objectives vary from language to language, country to country, period to period, and situation to situation (Rivers, 1981). The significance of objectives in a language teaching syllabus lies in the fact that they set out the overall framework which, if successfully explored, enables the student to develop his or her intellectual powers through the study of another language, including, of course, its cultural dimension. The attainment of the objectives allows the student to express himself within another linguistic and cultural framework as a result of his newly acquired ability to communicate with speakers of the target language.

Giving priority to the objectives in textbook development does not in any way indicate that the needs of students are being ignored. Attention to objectives accomplishes the exact reverse: it benefits the students by facilitating their learning efforts. Many educators, including Rivers (1976), Reinert (1970), and Jakobvists (1970) express interest in several

student-related factors in setting objectives. Important among these factors are the students' identity, background, ethnic heritage, attitudes towards other cultures, goals and motivation in learning, etc. ( Cited by Rivers 1981 - 11 ).

While text-book writers must consider all these factors, the most critical question they must ask themselves is this: Why do the users of any text-book wish to learn the target language? If the writer can establish precisely why the students seek to learn the target language, he can arrange and plan the course syllabus according to their needs. This task, for example, would be quite simple if the students using the proposed text-book all had the same clear aim. As the case, for example, this describes the situation in preparing text-books for those in Saudi Arabia who wish to learn Arabic as a foreign language for religious purposes. In this case, the ultimate objectives are obvious: concentration on the content and methodology which accomplish the expected behaviour through experience and interaction with the learning situation to achieve the learners' goal of Arabic fluency. As Rivers writes, "After we have found who our students are and why they want to learn the language, we could be in a much better position to decide how the language should be presented and taught within the objectives of the target language" (Rivers, 1981:12).

Within the limitations of the main objectives, there are several other factors which play an important role in teaching a foreign language. Examples of these include: the skill of the teacher, the student number in the class, and the time available. When framing objectives, these and other factors need to be taken into consideration. The majority of text-book designers agree that to expect benefit from curriculum planning, objectives should be formulated clearly in order to avoid ambiguity and contradictions in the presentation of material.

Objectives should, ideally, be stated in measurable terms. This allows for testable evaluation of student achievement. If this is done, everyone will know what kind of behaviour the student should develop. This enables students and teachers to recognize such behaviour when it appears.

Plainly stated objectives will be clear both in themselves and in their accomplishment. These objectives will systematically relate to the general aims and the particularities of teaching and learning.

Owing to the significance of teaching and learning foreign languages in the last two decades, there is a growing tendency towards the improvement of teaching materials and methodology. This improvement includes giving greater priority to objectives as a shaping factor. In this respect, the international organization UNESCO remarked (1975) that plainly

stated objectives are essential to teaching students to express themselves in new languages both orally and in written form. This aids the overall goal of increasing mankind's knowledge of literature and culture, improving scientific, technical and professional skills, as well as developing international understanding and cooperation.

Our aim of teaching foreign languages is to help the learner experience broadly different types of life, as well as to gain accurate performance and full understanding of language function. Kharma and Hajjaj (1988:199) look at objectives for teaching foreign languages on three levels, each dependent on the others. The first level incorporates the general objectives that are adopted by the state or government, and which reflect its policies and philosophy. The second level of objectives is that of skills development for the sake of enabling the learner to employ language skills (e.g., listening, speaking, reading and writing) when he or she communicates with a native language user. The third level incorporates the behavioural objectives whose main purpose is to create behavioural changes in the learner. It is important to mention that teaching of all kinds, language teaching included, seeks to enable students to effect desired behavioural changes.

It is mentioned above that objectives for teaching foreign languages differ from country to country, from society to society, and from situation to situation. The Arabic language, as a living and international language, imposes its own unique objectives. Therefore, it is the task of the syllabus designer and text-book writer clearly to define the objectives in the teaching materials. In relation to Arabic text-books, there is a common assumption that objectives should be stated in the introduction to the text-book or, at least, in the teacher's guidebook.

Whenever and wherever several Arabic language text-book writers meet, a frequent topic of discussion is the objectives for teaching the language. In a symposium on text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, held in Cairo between the 10 - 12 November 1981, experts pointed out the following essential objectives:-

### **1.2.1 Spiritual Objectives**

With this objective, text-book writers aim to spread the Arabic language among non-Arab Muslims who require knowledge of the Arabic language for religious purposes.

### **1.2.2 National Objectives**

Tend to create ties with the Arab emigrants who live in non-Arab

countries and the African nations who are members of the Arab League, but are not native Arabic speakers, such as Somalia, Jibuti and Mauretania.

### **1.2.3 Cultural Objectives**

With this objective, scholars aim to teach Arabic to people not included in (1) and (2) above who want to study Arabic culture and civilization for political, economic or commercial purposes. This objective also includes those people who wish to learn Arabic for some other reason of self-interest.

Despite their the importance the previously stated objectives remain quite general. When actually planning the design of a syllabus, it is necessary to be more specific. This enables decision making in relation to specific steps. In relation to this, طعيمة (1985:29) insists that objectives for teaching Arabic as a foreign language must include giving the learner the opportunity to practise his or her Arabic in a manner similar to (or as close as possible to) that of native speakers. This helps them recognize unique characteristics of the language, distinguish its sounds, vocabulary, and constructions, as well as to recognise the cultural concepts of the related Arab societies.

In the case of those preparing text-books for teaching Arabic as a



foreign language, it is necessary to treat the four language skills equally in order to give proper emphasis to each of them. This simply reflects the necessity of considering the individual objectives of each skill. This procedure assists the textbook writer to present, and teacher to employ, the material content of the textbook clearly and systematically.

In this regard, الناقه (1983) determines the objectives of the Arabic language skills in the following manner :-

#### **1.2.4 Listening Skill**

As to listening, the textbook writer should ensure that the learner recognises and discerns the Arabic sounds and their differential function. The learner should recognise the difference between long and short vowels when he hears them. He should be able to distinguish between sounds in their production, such as the emphatic sounds, the oral sounds and the nasal sounds, comparing and contrasting with those of his own language.

The textbook writer commits himself to giving the student the chance to recognize the features of the Arabic language since such features are considered uniquely characteristic of the Arabic language. The writer of the textbook and teachers employing it should be aware of the reactions and excitement which result from actual experience of conversation, dialogue,

and discussion.

To ensure the achievement of the teaching objectives, active practice in a 'contrived' setting is required to stimulate the learner to practise the language on his own. The contrived practice could take place in the form of the learner's responses to certain questions or in receiving orders, or in reactions to good or bad news.

#### **1.2.5 The Speaking Skill**

It is generally realised that speaking is more difficult than listening because the student can understand utterances of words more easily and faster than he can produce them. The speaking skill depends on the listening skill. The better you receive, the better you can reproduce sounds. The speaking skill actually depends on the recognition of the correct pronunciation, the use of correct systems of sounds and constructions, and remembering that for every situation there is an appropriate utterance. It is not acceptable for the student to say to his teacher, for example, 'How are you, old man?', although the sentence is grammatically correct. Consequently the student has to be familiar with:-

a. pronouncing the Arabic sounds as the native speaker does, showing

- relevant and correct intonation and stress features;
- b. correctly using long and short vowels in Arabic;
- c. using vocabulary which suits his need, and which enables him to communicate with native speakers;
- d. expressing himself correctly and fluently in Arabic in a manner appropriate to the context or situation in which he finds himself; and
- e. acquiring speech habits with their meanings and connotations which will help him to understand the contexts of speech.

The teacher may employ the following techniques, among many others, to help achieve his objectives:-

1. asking the student to do something,
2. asking him about names and places,
3. asking him to tell his classmates a short story, or
4. to tell the class how he spent his weekend.

### **1.2.6 Reading Objectives**

Reading is one of the most important facets of teaching a foreign language. When we talk about the employment of reading in text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, we have to consider the strong

relationship between the written symbols and the message conveyed by these symbols. Reading a text correctly does not necessarily mean that the "reader" understands what it says. Conversely a student may be able to understand what a writer ultimately means without being able to read it correctly.

An example of the former situation is the Muslim who reads the Quran perfectly without fully understanding its meaning. The latter situation may be exemplified by people who can understand the meaning of a text but who cannot read it aloud correctly. Such matters should be considered when teaching reading. One, must take into account of:-

1. whether the student can read in Arabic aloud;
2. the student's ability to recognize the Arabic sounds and produce them correctly in phonological strings, together with the appropriate stress and intonation features;
3. to recognize the changes in meaning with changing constructions;
4. to recognize meanings from contexts and understand the implied meanings and their relations to the theme.

To show the implication of these objectives practically, the teacher could ask the student to read a written text to his classmates, paying attention to the phonological counterparts of punctuation marks, the

phonetic context, stress and intonation patterns and the context of the situation. The student should also be able to reconstruct sentences and give the meaning of key words which reflect his understanding of the text that he reads.

### **1.2.7 The Objectives of Writing Skills**

Writing is not isolated from other language skills. The ability to read a set of symbols known as the letters of an alphabet of a language is one skill. Writing has its own features such as the ability to shape the letters of the alphabet, the recognition of right combinations of letters, and the ability to express oneself through the written word.

النقطة (Ibid.) describes the objectives of writing in teaching Arabic as a foreign language as follows:-

1. To write the Arabic alphabet recognizing the relationship between the letter and the sound;
2. to have the ability to write the letters in a separate and connected way, distinguishing the shape of the letter at the beginning, middle and end of the Arabic word;
3. To be able to write clearly and correctly from the right to the left;
4. To know how and when to use punctuation markers.

5. To realize quickly the dictation rules and the writing system;
6. To realize the discrepancies in unvowelled texts between writing and pronunciation, intensification (التشديد) and nunation (التنوين);
7. To write down ideas and thoughts, descriptions, etc., in paragraphs using suitable words and constructions.

The previous objectives can be articulated in language teaching by, for example, summarizing a written text, writing a letter to a friend, writing a report about certain meetings, describing something or putting down ideas and thoughts.

### **1.3 The Syllabus Design of the Textbook for Teaching**

#### **Arabic as a Foreign Language**

Textbooks for teaching Arabic as a foreign language cannot be prepared if the writer has no background in syllabus design. The selection and the presentation of his material depends on the type of syllabus he has adopted. Since this work deals with the analysis of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the primary aim is to know the directions that have previously been followed.

The reason for this is that some textbook writers mention in the

introduction to their books that they have adopted a certain syllabus design orientation, but, on close analysis, it turns out that the content itself indicates a different syllabus design orientation. However, I do not propose to give here full details about approaches to syllabus design and critiques of these approaches as this falls outside the scope of this thesis.

It is more important to give thought to effective syllabi which serve as guidelines for the evaluators of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, and the textbook writer as well.

### **1.3.1 The Grammatical or Structural Syllabus**

The grammatical (structural) syllabus derives from the idea that language is a system and that learning the language consists of learning

that system, as the user of the language has to express himself utilising the various features or elements of that system.

As he revises teaching material, the learner attempts to master linguistic forms. In this respect, Rivers (1981:72) says that "structural grammar has considerable influence on preparation of material for language

teaching. The emphasis on structural rather than lexical or situational meaning was basic to the development of patterned instructor drills". The grammatical syllabus tends to present together forms which are subject to the same rules, to avoid some exceptional rules which are presented later on. The structural syllabus considers the recognition and understanding of linguistic rules as the main purpose in learning the language. Vocabulary and social meaning have a secondary place, but at the same time, this type of syllabus usually requires long lists of vocabulary which must be learned during the course. These items would be arranged according to frequency of use. The main issue in the grammatical syllabus is that the content of each lesson is chosen in accordance with the grammatical rules and not according to the student's needs. Bell (1981:54) notices that "a purely grammatical syllabus presents linguistic items to the exclusion of other elements of language and presents them in an inefficient way".

Wilkins (1976:7) describes one of the problems faced in selecting and grading language in the grammatical syllabus. He believes that the lexical and grammatical criteria conflict with one another. Certain lexical items may cause grammatical difficulties. Thus, he suggests that, since the vocabulary content is secondary in importance, vocabulary may be held until



the major part of the structural system has been learned.

Concepts underlying grammatical syllabi have been subjected to serious criticism. Widdowson (1968) argues that the grammatical syllabus ignores the contextual communication factors within language. As a reaction to the grammatical syllabus, which concentrates on the linguistic forms of language, many alternative syllabi have been developed. The situational syllabus is one of the common syllabus design types for foreign language teaching.

### **1.3.2 A Situational Syllabus**

The situational syllabus emphasizes the situational need as the starting point and foundation for the construction of teaching materials. The situational syllabus serves to provide learners with the knowledge and skills they need to deal with social demands. Syllabus design, within this framework, considers language in social use, taking into account situations and places in which the learners will employ the target language. Interactions within the situational patterns will be the primary concern here. Linguistic forms are not ignored, but considered secondary to and dependent on the actual situations. In this scheme, a textbook writer could choose a specific topic for a unit of study and then choose for inclusion in

the book grammatical items according to the nature of that topic. The selection of items for the situational syllabus depends more on the verbal behaviour, that is, the utterances are seen not as linguistic units but as behavioral ones.

In the opinion of some educators, the situational syllabus is a useful one, because of the priority it gives to the learner, rather than the subject. In fact, situational courses do exist. They consist of learning units with labels like 'At the Airport', 'At the Restaurant', 'Buying a Football Ticket', 'Asking for Directions', etc.

Despite the popularity of situational syllabi, this system does present difficulties. Bell (1981:54) points out the problem textbook writers may encounter in predicting the precise situations the learners will face. Only a small number of situations can be predicted with certainty. Conversely, situational syllabi often create artificial topics which may fall well outside the students' actual needs. Likewise Wilkins (1976:17) writes, "It would be naive to think that the speaker is somehow linguistically at the mercy of the physical situation in which he finds himself. What the individual says is what he has chosen to say. It is a matter of his intention and purposes. He may go to the post office not to buy stamps but to complain about the non-arrival of a parcel, or to change some money. Making

complaints is not what one typically goes to the post office for". It seems that Wilkins seeks to take language learning beyond the specific situation which is the centre of interest for any given unit. He mentions the making of requests and the search for information; these circumstances can arise in many different types of situations. So, extending the idea of specific situation to include broad uses of language, for example, making requests, giving commands, offering apologies, etc., would be helpful. Wilkins believes that the speaker, by his own free choice, determines content of utterance. To overcome these difficulties, Wilkins proposes the notional syllabus.

### **1.3.3 The Notional Syllabus**

The standard work on notional syllabi was written by Wilkins in 1976. In this work, he describes the limits of the grammatical syllabus and situational syllabus. He states (1976:18) that "the grammatical syllabus seeks to teach the language by taking the learner progressively through the form of the target language. The situational syllabus does so by recreating the situations in which native speakers use the language. While in neither case would it be denied that languages are learned for the purposes of communication, both leave the learner short of adequate communicative capacity".

The notional syllabus takes communication as its starting point. Rather than ask how speakers of the language express themselves grammatically or how and when they use the language, those who work within the framework of a notional syllabus ask about what language users communicate. The resulting syllabus is called a notional syllabus (Ibid:8). The advantage of the notional syllabus is that it considers the communicative fact as the primary focus. By enhancing the ability of the learner to develop his communicative competence, the notional syllabus is said to be superior to the grammatical syllabus. Such a syllabus concentrates on the different types of language function, including grammatical forms.

The above discussion of syllabus design, in its comparison of different styles, shows the importance of purposive thought in the creation of a language course. In relation to text-books written for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, it must be admitted that writers have not given adequate consideration to choosing an optimum syllabus design. Consequently confusion arises in the minds of learners, leading to problems which are not caused by the language itself, but by its presentation in the textbook.

Textbook writers need to give more thoughtful consideration to

textbook content and sequence of materials. For example, in teaching grammar, the writer should select which items to present at each level of learning. If it were suggested that Nominal sentences should come first, the next matter could be what type of predicate would be presented first, whether simple predicate or full sentence or semi-sentence. Should the writer present Arabic verbs with their inflection before nouns, or in the reverse order? When teaching sounds, which ones should be offered first? Familiar sounds such as b and m or the more difficult sounds, such as, kh, ʿ and gh, etc. In the case of vocabulary, should abstract words precede concrete words? Should vocabulary be presented according to meaning or according to formation (participle, verbal noun etc.)? The significance of the answers to the previous questions depends mainly on the objectives of teaching the Arabic language and the kind of syllabus that the writer has adopted.

The structural syllabus may require different treatment from the notional and the situational syllabus. The structural syllabus, which revolves around linguistic forms may consider the kernel sentences before their derivations. The simple affirmative sentence could be taught before the complex negative sentence. The predicate sentences come before the

interrogative sentences.

The situational syllabus, on the other hand, deals with the social situations as a base for the content of teaching. Each topic or subject would have its own utterances, vocabulary and constructions. A situation like 'in the class room' might require certain expressions such as ma ismuka (what is your name?), man anta (who are you?). It would also call for a certain intonation and stress for the predicate, the imperative and interrogative sentence constructions.

The notional syllabus depends on the speech acts. The notions of apology, request, consultation, or questioning require linguistic forms etc. In short, the teaching points will be determined in the light of the teaching objectives and the philosophy of the curriculum and its syllabus design.

Textbook preparation cannot be considered an easy task. This preparation requires taking into account the characteristics of objectives of the learners. In the absence of such information, the textbook will consist of words and constructions with little meaning. In such circumstances the student might not achieve any effective learning.

Before preparing a textbook for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, certain types of information should be gathered and explicitly stated. This may include:-

#### **1.4 The nature of the society in which the textbook will be taught**

To what extent will the society influence the teaching of Arabic as a second language or as a foreign language? Do the learners have a common background or different backgrounds? Do they have one objective or many different objectives? Will the language be taught for a specific purpose or general knowledge?

#### **1.5 The nature of the learners**

These factors include age, sex, proficiency level previously attained in Arabic, level of general education, reasons for studying Arabic (is it required or optional?), student attitudes toward the Arabic language and its culture, and their attitudes toward the chosen texts.

#### **1.6 The nature of the course syllabus**

Under this category, the writer would consider the type of syllabus adopted (situational, structural, notional or any other), the daily situations that the students are expected to experience, type and amount of vocabulary

(concrete or abstract, active or passive, function words or content words), types of construction (Which construction will be employed? Common constructions such as are used in the newspapers and media, classic, modern, or standard Arabic, dialects), types of cultural concepts presented in the text book. Does the book present the specific culture of individual countries or the general Arabic culture? Traditional or modern culture?

### **1.7 Practical considerations**

It is essential for the textbook writer to specify whether the learners are adults or children, whether the course is an intensive or more relaxed programme, whether it will last for a period of weeks or stretch into years.

A quality textbook for teaching Arabic as a foreign language can come only from a writer who has considered each of these concepts. These factors are, at the same time, basic standards by which text-books can be evaluated.

In relation to these basic elements which must be taken into consideration when preparing a textbook for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the writer will, of course, learn much from the practices, good and bad, established by those who have taught languages other than Arabic.



Many Arabic language teachers assume that learning a foreign language is similar, if not identical, to learning the first (native) language. Textbooks are written accordingly. In this case, Arabic teachers may use, in teaching Arabic as a second language, the same text-books employed for teaching it to Arab children. This procedure inevitably leads to disappointment. There are, in fact, significant differences between learning Arabic as a first and as a second language. طعيمة (1985:128) has described some of these differences, as follows:-

1. The native speaker acquires the language naturally, from the people who surround him, while the non-native learns it as another language quite different from his native tongue. This results in what many term, 'negative interference'.
2. The native speaker learns the language on the basis of internal motivation. If he is going to live life at all, language development is essential. The non-native seeks to meet less significant external requirements.
3. The native speaker acquires the language as a means of life. He cannot live without it. The non-native learns for secondary purposes. He might be able to get along well without the new language.
4. The native acquires his culture spontaneously, from his earliest days,

while the non-native speaker is learning a second culture, perhaps quite different from his own.

5. The native speaker practises his language continuously. This aids speedy learning. The non-native speaks the language only in class or in other set circumstances.
6. The native learner tries his language on all different occasions. The non-native often speaks the new language only in certain situations according to set plans.

Textbooks prepared for native Arabic speakers cannot, with any great success, be employed in teaching the language to non-native speakers. There must be a distinction between the two types of text-books.

### **1.8 Gradation of Items in Textbooks for Teaching**

#### **Foreign Languages**

One cannot deny that it is impossible to teach everything about a foreign language at the same time. The precise combination and sequence of individual items thus gains importance.

Language learning is definitely sequential. New learning is based on previous learning. So the significance of gradation should be taken into account when presenting specific points for learning. In this respect,

Mackey (1965:205) states that, "the beginning should be slow and accurate, rightly understood and immediately tested. Unless the first layer is firm, nothing should be built on it; for the whole structure will be developed from the foundations. All parts should be bound together so that one flows out of the other, and later units include earlier ones. Whatever precedes forms a step toward what follows, and the last steps should be traceable to the first by a clear chain of connection, when the learner realises that everything is in regular steps, he has a desire to go ahead".

Assuming systematic gradation to be necessary, the matter of how language material could best be ordered is a primary matter of consideration. Since this work ultimately aims to evaluate text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the discussion in this section will be restricted to some points which might face the evaluator of these text-books.

One should be aware of the kind of syllabus gradation which has been followed in producing a foreign language course. The syllabus design may have been grammatical, situational or notional/communicative. Grammatical syllabi give priority to the gradation of grammatical items, moving from simple to complex. Situational grading considers the importance of situations the learners will face, ordering text-books of this

type by this standard. Notional/Communicative grading arranges teaching items according to the notions/functions, for example measurement, location (notion) and apologising, requesting (function). This chapter cannot here discuss in detail the nature and criticism levelled against each one of these syllabus types. My intention is rather to ascertain which of them has been adopted by textbook writers, in order that I may evaluate text-books accordingly. It is here assumed, as Littlewood (1981:79) states, that the learner progresses from function to function without abandoning the previously learned structure.

When grading course material based on grammatical structure, it is a relatively simple task to arrange items on a continuum of simple to difficult, but in the cases of situational and notional grading, the issue becomes more complex. Who is to say which situation is easier than others, or, likewise, which notions should be taught at the earliest stages? In such cases, however, we could do as Bell (1981:61) did. He approached the grading problem from a different angle using the following criterion: which knowledge will be more readily useful to the student?

Textbook evaluators, on the other hand, also ought to consider textbook structure when evaluating the structure of material. They will generally face two types of gradation.

Linear gradation presents items singly. Each matter is discussed in detail. The student ideally attains complete command of the new information before proceeding to something else. In this method, the intensive practices employed by authors require considerable time, especially in a grammatically ordered system.

Cyclic gradation does the opposite. It frequently repeats similar material. The student, by returning to various language features several times, gradually becomes familiar with the language traits. In a course in which the material is ordered cyclically, the individual items are not presented and discussed exhaustively in single book sections as in strictly linear gradation, but single items keep recurring in the course. Every time a new aspect is introduced, it is clearly related to what has been already taught.

The current trend in language education is toward the cyclical method of gradation. Corder (1973) advocates this kind of gradation. He feels it is more closely related to the manner in which language is built. Hawatt (1974) also believes that cyclic gradation strongly resembles the natural process of language learning. Van Els. (1984) claims that cyclic gradation makes the course material more interesting. It also encourages the learner to make greater effort in learning the new language. In current

thought, cyclic gradation, rather than linear gradation, is generally considered more suitable for language courses. Knowledge of the two types of gradation better enables textbook evaluation.

Unfortunately, there is no standard research or study offering recognized criteria for ordering and grading Arabic grammatical items, although most Arabic text-books currently in use depend on grammatical syllabus design.

Despite the absence of comprehensive and accurate criteria for ordering and presenting Arabic language construction patterns, there are some factors which should be taken into consideration by future writers of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

عبدالرحيم (1980) has described a series of such factors. He claims to have successfully applied his method to the foreign students at the Islamic University in Medinah. In this study, he classified the grammatical items as nouns, particles and verbs, considering that in the beginning the student learns only declinable nouns and should keep indeclinable nouns until the advanced stages of the course.

It is simpler for students to learn Arabic nouns, if the forms they learn are always in the nominative case and not in a sentence. Considering that the nominative is the 'original state' of Arabic nouns, the student must

learn words like **كتاب** , **معلم** etc. It is suggested in this study also that nouns such as Mustafa, and cabdulla should not be presented in the early stages of learning, because such things could confuse the beginner because they have difficult sounds and forms. In relation to the preposition, the study suggests the gradual presentation of a few prepositions in each lesson with intensive practice exercises. When dealing with the numerals, the writer recommends teaching them in isolation, for example, Five, twenty-five, etc. Then after gaining familiarity with the numerals, students may begin putting them in sentences starting with masculine, such as **ستة كتب** (six books) then feminine such as **ثلاث طالبات** (three girls), with full explanation of the rule. In teaching the dual, the study suggests that it should be taught after the plural, concentrating on **هذان** and **هاتان** which appear frequently in Arabic. In relation to the **تفضيل** forms, the study suggests that text-books be restricted to two patterns which appear often. Examples of these include the form of "Khalid is taller than Ali "and" Ahmad is the tallest student". When teaching inna and its sisters, the study recommends a clear distinction between anna and lianna, because many students fail to use such particles correctly. When it comes to teaching prepositions, the study indicates that nouns governed by a preposition should precede construct nouns in the genitive. In this study it is suggested that the writer present

verbs: imperfect, perfect, then imperative. In the case of predication of the pronoun to the verb, the study suggests that the textbook and the teacher present only some of these pronouns, since it is difficult for the learner to acquire all the pronouns at once.

Such a study could be useful for the presentation of the grammatical structures within text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

Textbook writers may take advantage of such study in their arrangement of grammatical items in textbooks for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. However, there remains a great need for more substantial research in this field.

### **1.9 Drills in Textbooks for Teaching Arabic** **as a Foreign Language**

When one evaluates a textbook intended for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, one must keep in mind the importance of textbook drills. Because language skills require practising until they become part of the students' behaviour or competence, drills take priority. Indeed, many scholars consider drills the activity which most affects student mastery in



language acquisition, whether on the cognitive level or on the psychomotor level.

Previously used traditional methods of language instruction did not pay adequate attention to drills. Students were put in the place of needing to learn grammatical rules without the opportunity to implement those rules. As a result, they often did not properly learn the language.

In line with these ideas, there are two important new directions in relation to language drills. The first of these calls for the adoption of pattern drills which consider the shapes and the structures of language which are most important, regardless of the grammatical or social meaning of the construction. Supporters of this theory consider it acceptable to present adult students with examples such as, "I am stupid" - "I am a child" etc., which are not socially accepted. ابوبكر (1980) reveals that in the 1950's, pattern practice gained popularity. Scholars concentrated not on traditional grammatical practices, but on grammar in actual use.

As with any new system, pattern practice received its share of criticism. Much of this centred on the fact that language training should seek to enable the full process of communication, not the ability to produce certain types of sentences which may not help students to express themselves out of the classroom. Out of this criticism, the second new

direction emerged.

Within this scheme, language education focuses on communication rather than mechanical practice. This method aims to build positive communication which depends on free forms which help students to understand the meaning of various constructions and use these in a variety of circumstances. Thus, communicative language teaching concerns itself more with meaning than with forms.

One compromise between these two theories has been gaining popularity. This solution claims that the pattern direction and the communicative direction complement each other. While the ultimate aim of learning a language is communication, this communication must be controlled by rules and systems. Thus, perfect communication is achieved only when language patterns are mastered. Errors in learning the patterns lead to the social isolation of the learner, even where he expresses his meaning adequately. Both pattern practice and communicative practice should be taught side-by-side.

In agreement with this conclusion, it might be stated that teaching a language involves more than forming habits. It must also include practice exercises which are instrumental in fostering the development and evolution of sentence structure patterns which, in turn, can be used to

generate new and novel sentences.

when students realize that what they are learning in the classroom helps them communicate elsewhere, they gain courage in practising the language in many different situations. It seems that the mechanical (pattern) practices are very necessary, particularly for the beginning student. But, since such patterns should gradually give way to other modes of language practice, the advanced stages of learning should depend more on communicative practices.

When evaluating text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, طعيمة (1985) pays attention to the fact that the language instructions should be clear and suitable for the students' level of knowledge. He points out that improper instructions could cause great problems for beginning students.

Examples of improper instructions include those which are written in either classical Arabic or a local dialect which the student does not understand. In addition, some textbook writers use unfamiliar words when writing their instructions. When the student cannot understand what the textbook asks him to do, he simply will not be able to do it. Perhaps this explains why many textbook writers recommend the presentation of instructions in the learners' own native language. When evaluating

text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, attention should be paid to the author's ability to present practice materials which cover well both language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and language elements (sounds, vocabulary, construction, and culture).

When examining text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, concern should be shown to the types of exercises employed. Many textbook writers unduly restrict themselves to certain types which may not achieve the primary purposes of learning the Arabic language. As a matter of fact, authors could offer a wider selection of exercise formats. Some examples of these include:-

#### **1.9.1 Transformation exercises**

Within this type, students transfer sentences from one form to another, for example, transforming a sentence from interrogation to negation, from affirmation to negation, from present to past, etc.

#### **1.9.2 Expansion exercises**

In these drills, students expand the sentence given. An example of this form would be:-

the teacher: the student is in the classroom

student: the student is in the classroom

the teacher: (good)

student: the good student is in the classroom

the teacher: He writes the lesson

the student: the good student writes the lesson in the classroom.

### **1.9.3 Connection drills**

Here, students make a connection between two or more sentences.

For example:-

teacher : I met the man - he came yesterday

the student : I met the man who came yesterday

teacher : I met the men - they came yesterday

student : I met the men who came yesterday.

### **1.9.4 Alteration exercises**

In these drills, the teacher or the textbook gives a sentence which the student is asked to modify. The resultant sentence takes a different form from the original. For example:-

the teacher : I saw the boy

student : I saw him

the teacher : I drove the woman's car

I drove her car.

### **1.9.5 Development exercise**

Here, students add words to the given sentence. For example:-

the teacher: I bought a book

the student: I bought a book and pen from the book shop

### **1.9.6 Arrangement exercises**

In this case, the teacher gives words in random order. It is the students' task to arrange them into an ordered sentence. For example:-

the teacher: old - my brother - years - six

the student: My brother is six years old.

### **1.9.7 Substitution exercises**

In this drill, the teacher gives a sentence and asks the student to replace one word by other words given by the teacher. For example:-

the teacher: Mohammed went to Taif

student: Mohammed went to Taif

the teacher: Cairo

student: Mohammed went to Cairo

the teacher: the boy writes a letter every week

student: the boy writes a letter every week

teacher: man - month

student: the man writes a letter every month

teacher: Ahmed is good

student: Ahmed is good

teacher: but he is absent too much

student: Ahmed is good but he is absent too much

These exercises, as well as others (such as repetition, yes and no, command and request, asking permission, question tags, exclamations, and obligations) can all be considered in preparing language text-books. They all help students in their practice of the Arabic language in its different forms so that they will be able to employ them in actual situations.

The most important matter for me, as a textbook evaluator, is the question of whether or not textbook writers pay adequate attention to the different types of drills. I must also consider the suitability of the drills to

the students' level of knowledge. I must also ensure that the drills offer practice in the broad range of language skills and elements.

### **1.10 CONCLUSION**

In this section, many important points have been discussed. These include the objectives of teaching a foreign language which are of central importance in the teaching/learning process. In the absence of precise language objectives, the course plan may not achieve its main purpose. The variety of objectives from country to country, from situation to situation, and from time to time must be taken into account.

In applying this specifically to teaching the Arabic language, it has been mentioned that this language has its own primary objectives including national, spiritual, and cultural objectives. Within these and other limits, the textbook writer is committed to presenting the material which deals with both language elements and language skills.

We have also outlined in this section how syllabus design plays an important role in teaching a foreign language. As has been mentioned, textbook writers could adopt any one of the main syllabus design types: the grammatical syllabus, the situational syllabus, or the notional syllabus. The selection of one of these forms should be based on several considerations,



including the nature of the society in which the textbook will be employed, the nature of the learner and his needs, and the nature of the course syllabus.

This section has also focused on gradation of language materials, pointing out the two frequently used types of gradations. Knowledge of these helps one to arrange teaching points accordingly.

The first of these is the cyclic gradation method which allows the student gradually to familiarize himself with items in a language course by returning to them at various times. The other method is 'linear' gradation. Here, items are typically strung along in a line. Each item is taught extensively before the next one is introduced.

In relation to text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, traditionally the grammatical gradation style has been adopted. If this is the case, then we have to take into account how items have been arranged in text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Textbook evaluators should bear in mind the gradation of sounds, vocabulary, and constructions in text-books for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

We have also discussed in this section the types of exercise that are presently employed in language text-books. These exercises determine and clarify the course objectives, encourage students to greater learning,

and evaluate and test the quality and quantity of the learning process.

The textbook, must include a variety of exercises which treat the different skills and linguistic features of a language. These exercises must be formulated in a manner which helps students to use them, not only in the classroom, but in actual life as well.

When examining a textbook for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, we must consider the following questions:-

1. Do the objectives of the book appear in the book's introduction or in the teacher's guide?
2. Has each skill received treatment that is clear and adequate to its importance?
3. What syllabus design orientation, if any has been selected?
4. Are the teaching points presented in the light of the selected syllabus design?
5. Are the items presented in a cyclic or linear gradation?
6. Have the constructions in the book been arranged in accordance with a set procedure?
7. Is there any contradiction in the application of this procedure?
8. Is the language instruction suitable for the students' previous knowledge of Arabic?

9. Does the written language appear in classical Arabic, modern standard Arabic, or a dialect?
10. To what extent do the exercises demonstrate variety and comprehensive coverage of the language?
11. Does the textbook concentrate more on pattern exercises or communicative exercises?

These and other similar questions may appear in the actual analyses which help those involved in evaluating text-books employed in teaching Arabic as a foreign language to accomplish their task in the best possible manner.

## **1.11 REASONS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING ARABIC**

### **TO NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS**

Many nations are interested in spreading their languages which carry and express their cultures and their social, political, economic and religious concepts. They generously spend huge amounts of money on teaching these languages, using modern methods and technology which take into account the educational and psychological factors relevant to the learners.

There are many people in the world who, for one reason or another, wish to study Arabic. It is therefore the duty of those who are interested in teaching Arabic, among the Arabs and the non-Arabs, to promote and launch the teaching of Arabic on sound grounds.

Many non-Arabic speaking individuals are interested in learning Arabic for a number of reasons:-

1. Muslims from non-Arabic speaking countries aspire to learn Arabic because it is an important element in the proper discharge of their religious duties. Arabic is involved in the performance of the ritual prayers, the Qur'an itself is Arabic, and the invocations to God on the

many religious occasions are in Arabic. There is also the Hadith literature which, together with the Qur'an are at the very heart of the life of every Muslim community.

2. The discovery of crude oil in the Arab World has given the area unprecedented significance in modern times, particularly as most of the world's known reserves in oil are located in this area. The geographical location of the region and its strategic and political importance have also contributed towards highlighting its significance to policy makers. In consequence, interest in the culture and civilisation of the Arab World developed among outsiders, particularly the Western powers, who regarded that knowledge as a means towards understanding the Arabs, their history and current situation.
3. Owing to the huge amounts of revenue which became available in the Arab World as a result of the increases in oil prices, the Arab countries attempted to develop themselves in all spheres. That necessitated inviting international foreign companies and firms to participate in this development process. Since Arabic was the medium by means of which effective communication could proceed, it became necessary for those who deal with Arab countries to learn Arabic.
4. At one stage in history, Arabic was the language of the arts, sciences

and literature. It was by means of Arabic that the results of the many great endeavours of Antiquity in the arts, literature and the different sciences were transmitted and so preserved. In addition, Arabic was a flourishing language before Islam. It preserved the Jahiliyyah poetry which reflects aspects of Arab life of that time. Many scholars therefore engage in learning Arabic in order to equip themselves with the necessary tools which will enable them to study this rich and varied intellectual output. Moreover, Arabic is an international language. It is one of the recognised languages of the United Nations and its different organisations. One only needs to fiddle with a radio set to realise the great number of stations which transmit Arabic programmes containing miscellaneous items in all fields pertaining to the Arabs and their life.

5. Islamic countries have started to consolidate and strengthen their ties with the Arab countries, as well as between themselves. This has been clearly demonstrated in the conferences of the Islamic Summit held in different places in the Arab and Islamic Worlds. This fact in itself, constitutes an incentive for spreading and learning Arabic by the peoples of those countries. After all, it is the language of the Qur'an which Muslims throughout the world cherish and respect, and which

unites all those peoples together. Furthermore, there is a strong tendency towards the creation of an Islamic Union, the official language of which would be Arabic; in consequence, the interest in the language could become among the basic priorities for the non-Arabic speaking Muslims.

6. The Arab nation, like other nations, contributes economic assistance to some developing countries. This is evident in the establishment of a number of banks, like the Arab Development Fund, the Islamic Bank, the Saudi Development Fund, in addition to the contributions of other banking institutions, such as the International Bank for Construction and Redevelopment, and many others. Steps of this nature influence the international economy and development plans in underdeveloped countries. However, as a result of the commercial and economic transactions between the Arab countries and the international organisations, learning and teaching Arabic becomes an issue worth considering.

7. There are minorities in many countries of the world who consider themselves to be Arabs. The members of these minorities endeavour to speak Arabic among themselves, albeit on a narrow scale, to preserve the cultural and linguistic links which bind them to the motherland.

Those minorities are committed to Arabic, to learn it and preserve it as part of their inherited tradition.

The foregoing factors lie behind the increased interest among Arabs and non Arabs in Arabic. To respond to this interest properly, efforts in the development of methods and materials are required. Scholars working in this field must work together to help meet the demand to learn Arabic.

#### **1.11.1 Teaching Arabic to non-Arabic Speakers**

Interest in learning Arabic by non-Arabic speakers in other countries conquered by Islam emerged in the early period of the Muslim State. Many non-Arabs delved deeply into the language and became pioneers in the sciences and arts which flourished in the Islamic State. As a matter of fact, many of the most famous scholars of Arabic were themselves non-Arabs, the Persians being prominent amongst them. It is worth pointing out that Arabic was the official language of the Islamic state in which diplomacy and the business of the state were conducted. The influence of Arabic on other languages was enormous, as reflected in the vast array of loan words which many languages like, Swahili, Hausa, Persian, Maltese,



Spanish, etc. have taken from Arabic.

In modern times, the teaching of Arabic has greatly expanded. The curricula and number of institutions which teach Arabic as a second/foreign language have diversified and multiplied. There are in Islamic countries many institutions which teach Oriental and Islamic studies. The interest in Oriental Studies, including Arabic, also flourished in Europe and America and led to the establishment of many Arabic and Islamic Studies Departments in Western Universities. It may be worth pointing out in this respect that teaching Arabic in recent decades has started to take due account of the findings of other sciences such as, Applied Linguistics, Educational Psychological and Social Studies. In other words, teaching Arabic is no longer confined to language teaching phenomena only. Interest in the teaching methodologies has also received adequate attention and its due share of development to the extent that new technologies and devices have been adopted and implemented in teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

When the interest in learning Arabic started to attract great numbers of people, the Arab governments realised their responsibilities towards teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. A number of colleges (institutions) for teaching Arabic has been established. There are, for

instance, the colleges which have been set up for this purpose in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. There is also the Khartoum International Institute (College) for Training Arabic Language Teachers to non-Arabic Speakers, and there is the Bou-Rgiba College in Tunis. There is a unit for teaching Arabic at the University of Alexandria, and another analogous unit at Cairo University, in addition to the Arabic Departments at the Universities of Kuwait, Qatar, Jordan and others.

The enthusiasm of those concerned with teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers induced them to double their efforts for the sake of teaching Arabic in a better and more satisfactory way. With the foregoing goal in mind, many conferences, seminars and workshops were held, among which we can refer to:-

1. The Workshop which was held in Damascus 1973, under the auspices and supervision of UNESCO, during which papers were delivered on teaching Arabic to non-native speakers.
2. The First International (conference) on teaching Arabic to non-Native Speakers was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, between 26-30 March, 1978. The conference was attended by a great number of people from all over the world who were interested in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. The lectures and seminars at this conference revolved

around the following topics.

- a. Materials and methods.
- b. Teacher selection and training.
- c. Successful learners' characteristics.
- d. Learning problems and difficulties.
- e. Teaching aids.

The conference proceedings were published in three volumes. The first deals with the materials, the second with teacher training methods and aids and the third and last volume is devoted to the features of successful learners and the problems they encounter in learning the foreign language as well as the cultural dimension.

- 3. A workshop on specialised books for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers was held in Rabat, Morocco, between 4-7 March, 1980. Among the topics dealt with at this conference were the following:-
  - a. The preparation of materials for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers.
  - b. The textbook, scope, content and design features.
  - c. The problems in reading Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.
  - d. Language drills.
  - e. The use of pictures in the text-books for teaching Arabic to

non-native speakers.

f. The use of visual aids in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers.

g. The role of the dictionary in teaching Arabic to non-native speakers.

h. The text-book: new perspectives.

4. In 1981 and 1982, two workshops were held in Qatar on teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, and another workshop in Medina, Saudi Arabia, 1981. A third workshop was held in Amman, Jordan, in 1978, and a fourth was held in Malaysia between 12-15 December 1983. These workshops covered the whole range of topics which pertained to the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language.

#### **1.11.2 The School Textbook**

Foreign language teaching involves the Teacher, the student and the text-book. Within this triangle, the text-book occupies an important place. It is a source of information for the student and his companion at home and in school. The book sets out the aim and objective of the course and specifies, directly or indirectly, the teaching methodology. In the introduction one often finds information covering the purpose of the book and the preferred method of the authors, as well as lists concerning further

supporting materials. The development of new types of material in no way reduces the importance of the book as a tool.

The production and development of appropriate text-books has not been at the top of the agenda of those who are engaged in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Frequently, we find text-books which fall below the desired standard, in terms of production, contents and stated objectives. A brief survey of the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language reveals the following short-comings:-

1. The occurrence of confusion between teaching Arabic to native speakers and teaching it to non-native speakers. This tendency is most glaringly obvious in the use of books which are designed to teach Arabic to native-speakers for the purpose of teaching the language to non-Arab students, irrespective of the great difference between the two types of learner.
2. Many authors of text-books for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers borrow considerably from books designed for teaching Arabic to native speakers with very little modification to suit their own particular needs. Moreover, these authors continue to employ the same methodology in the different enterprise of teaching Arabic to non-native speakers with very little adaptation. The reason for this

could be attributed either to financial difficulties, lack of relevant expertise or to the mistaken belief that there is no fundamental difference between the teaching of Arabic to native speakers and teaching it to non-native speakers.

3. Many Arab governments send special books for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers at specific levels. These books are unfortunately used by teachers to teach other levels. So frequently, books for the advanced level are used to teach Arabic to complete beginners, and vice versa. In addition, books which were designed to be taught over a whole year have been actually taught in a very short period (three months, for instance). Situations like these tax the learner and run the risk of pushing him to abandon the effort of learning the language.
4. It should be admitted that some of the teachers who teach Arabic to non-native speakers in some Arab countries lack proper expertise or competence. It is therefore deemed that the presence of a good and balanced text-book may compensate for the aforementioned deficiency.
5. There are books which rely on the translation method only, in the sense that they present the contents of the books in both Arabic and English. The disadvantages and drawbacks of the translation method are widely recognised and acknowledged. Books which apply or are based on this

approach over-concentrate on language structure at the expense of more communicatively oriented objectives.

6. Some books do not adopt a well thought-out and coherent plan in introducing the vocabulary, the sounds, or the grammatical structures or constructions. Furthermore the balance between these items may not always be fully justified in terms of the objective.

7. Some text-books heavily rely on the printed word in the conventional sense, ignoring aids such as pictures, maps, timetables, menus etc.

The shortcomings and drawbacks of the aforementioned types of text-book do not at all mean that there are no good text-books for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. Some text-books which have appeared in recent years could, with little modification, be considered suitable and adequate for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. These books avoid many of the short-comings and pitfalls which we have identified in the preceding set of comments.

### **1.11.3 The Significance of the Present Study**

The preceding comments paint a less than satisfactory picture of the state of text-books in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language. But teaching Arabic as a foreign language is a recent addition to the field of

Arabic linguistic studies in general. Within this sub-area, text-book evolution has barely started. It is therefore essential to take the first steps towards bridging the gap between available text-books and future ones by analysing the forms, in the light of insights from Applied Linguistics to pave the way for the production of better course-books.

In carrying out this task, we will rely on criteria that have been developed for the evaluation of text-books in TEFL. However, these criteria will be modified to suit our purposes, for the peculiarities of Arabic and its cultural significance warrant the adoption and adaptation of Arabic-specific criteria. These criteria have been presented elsewhere in this thesis.

There have been various attempts to analyse and evaluate Arabic teaching text-books. Positive results have been obtained which, if taken into consideration, would improve the standard and quality of the text-books. Nevertheless, text-book analysis so far has been carried out in a haphazard way, or in great haste, to the extent that neither the evaluator, nor the analyst, could give a genuine and comprehensive idea of the contents of the book. There are also those who base their analysis on subjective experience which is often not always free from emotional bias. I do not deny the relevance of subjective experience to the evaluation process, except



that the presence of constant and clear parameters which form the cornerstone of any analysis and evaluation is important if the evaluation concerned is to be subject to public scrutiny and informed, clear assessment.

The main aim of the present study is to analyse a text-book for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers which is currently being used in the Institute of Teaching Arabic to non-native speakers at King Saud University, Riyadh. The ultimate goal of this research is to improve the quality of the Arabic language text-books, for non-native speakers. This thesis evaluates the books for the purpose of helping future text-book authors to produce better materials.

I have suggested a set of parameters and applied them to the analysis of "Arabic For Beginners", the book which forms the scope of the present study. These parameters are not specific to the aforementioned book only, but could be utilised for the analysis of any text-book for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. In order to ensure the analytical adequacy of these parameters, I have presented a provisional set to a group of specialists in Education and Pedagogy, for critical evaluation. On the basis of the suggestions and valuable advice received from those specialists, the initial set was modified and improved, and the final version is included in

the thesis. These parameters are not conceived as a final and unalterable set, but as a broad outline of the factors which need to be taken into consideration in Arabic text-book evaluation. In fact, the parameters are no more than performance levels which the text-book writer needs to take into consideration to ensure the production of a sound and appropriate text-book.

We have concentrated, in the theoretical and the practical parts of this study, on four principal aspects related to the characteristics of a good text-book. These are:-

1. The sounds.
2. The vocabulary.
3. The constructions.
4. The culture.

Other factors must also be addressed, for example the intended aims of teaching Arabic materials accompanying the text-book and the text-book design. In this thesis we have chosen, for limitations of space and time, to restrict ourselves to the four features of language mentioned above, i.e. the sounds, the vocabulary, the construction and the culture.

## CHAPTER II

### TEACHING ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN SAUDI ARABIA

#### (THE STATE OF THE ART)

#### 2.1 EFFORTS OF THE ARABIC LANGUAGE INSTITUTIONS CONCERNING THE COMPILING OF A TEXT-BOOK OF TEACHING ARABIC TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

A review of the recent literature about teaching materials and aids used in the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language reveals that there is reason for concern regarding such materials, especially the text-book. This chapter will highlight some of the publications of the Arabic language institutes concerning text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. The reason for describing these books is to give some idea of the characteristics and content of each one for the purpose of helping interested persons in preparing text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. In this description we do not offer evaluation or critical judgment.

### **2.1.1 ARABIC LANGUAGE INSTITUTE, KING SAUD UNIVERSITY** **RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA.**

This institute has published a great number of text-books relating to the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language.

#### **- THE SERIES OF "ARABIC FOR LIFE"**

This series consists of four different grades of books in order of difficulty. It is one of the oldest, publications of the Arabic Language Institute. The authors of this series aim to teach Arabic through a curriculum which emphasises the skills and the various techniques for promoting them. The following is a description of the books in the series "Arabic for Life".

#### **- BOOK ONE - "Arabic for Life"**

The first book of the series is designed for beginners in Arabic who have no knowledge of the language. It is also considered as the basic book on which the other books are to be based. It is devoid of any information on the phonetics of Arabic to help the student differentiate between different Arabic sounds. Students interested in this topic are often referred to 'Arabic and its sounds' which is a publication of the Institute. Book one contains five units, each consisting of sixteen lessons covering such topics

as greetings, meetings, the days of the week, time and food. Each unit consists of a number of dialogues, exercises, lists of new vocabulary and expressions. The book also contains useful tests and an outline of grammatical terms. The book depends on the direct method of teaching Arabic and avoids using other methods such as grammar-translation, or using the student's own language. The vocabulary used is derived from the word list of Makkah and the word list of the Arabic Language Institute itself. In book one of "Arabic for Life" series there are many photographs and illustrations which help the learner to understand the dialogues in each unit. With respect to the teaching of grammar it appears that the book concentrates on particular features such as (pronouns), demonstratives and interrogatives which are presented through common Arabic expressions that are used daily. The book covers many topics which touch on a variety of cultural points.

The book concludes with a number of glossaries which consist of the entire vocabulary of the volume, grammatical terms, instructions and information, in addition to the recommended method for using the book. A preliminary version of the book was tried and tested for three years until it took its final shape.

## **- BOOK TWO**

The second book of the series "Arabic for Life" follows from volume one, progressing to more complex grammatical structures and a

wider range of vocabulary which can be applied in a variety of situations. This book consists of units each consisting of dialogues, exercises and a variety of grammatical structures. This book also adopts the direct method and exclusively uses modern standard Arabic. "Arabic for Life" book two aims to help the student to communicate orally and in writing, utilising a five-hundred word list. Each unit in this book is divided into four sections which concentrate on certain skills to help the student learn the language. At the end of each unit there is a reading text which includes not only the vocabulary previously studied but new vocabulary for future lessons. The purpose of the reading text is to allow the student to get used to reading, as language is mainly a matter of comprehension and inter-related skills and elements. Book two differs from book one in that it introduces the learner to the writing skill. There are thirty topics with pictures which encourage the student to write his own ideas and thoughts in sentences as well as giving the student the chance to present his opinions. Repeated exercise and practice are designed for verbal communication while writing depends on pattern and communication exercises.

Each unit of the book contains a glossary of the vocabulary used in the body of the text as well as the vocabulary relevant to the exercises. Page one of the book deals with classroom management, formulae such as:- open the book, repeat, listen, please, bring me this please, play the role of such and such, turn over the page, speak clearly etc.

A characteristic feature of this book is that it tries to present a

large number of topics covering real life situations with as much vocabulary as possible and with suitable constructions. For example, the subject of "الفندق" (Hotel) contains three related lessons. These are "الذهاب الى الفندق" which deals with transport, directions, etc. to the hotel, which relates to what normally happens in the hotel, and "مغادرة الفندق" which relate to leaving the hotel. Another example is "السوق". In this unit there are three related topics. These are

"الذهاب الى السوق - السوق المركزي - دكان الملابس"

It is clear that volume II aims to cover a few situations adequately. Each unit contains a summary of grammatical items as well as exercises of various types. Grammar is not presented deductively but inductively through sentences and expressions which manifest the grammatical rules.

### **- BOOK THREE**

Book three of "Arabic for Life" assumes a good knowledge of the Arabic language on the part of the learner. The students at this stage are supposed to be able to grasp the abstract concepts and normal use of the language. Book three aims to prepare the student for more communicative activities, with nine hundred words and expressions including Arabic-Islamic cultural expressions. This book contains three major units each consisting of fifteen lessons which are divided into four parts: A, B, C

and D.

The first part contains a repetitive dialogue while the second part focuses on the vocabulary and constructions of the dialogue. Part three concentrates on the correct use of grammar plus a written text for improving listening and reading comprehension. The fourth part presents more grammar associated with repetitive communication exercises. In the first unit of the book the authors present a language game which helps the student absorb the language in an enjoyable and interesting way. The book covers more than seventy types of drill and exercise for improving skills in speaking, reading and writing which confirms the fact that this volume concentrates on the written and spoken language.

Although grammar is presented functionally, the volume tries to cover the nature and use of grammatical features. For example, it emphasises the following features of the Arabic language:-

1. A nominal sentence begins with a subject, called ism (noun) in Arabic. Hence the name of this type of sentence: *جملة اسمية*
2. A nominal sentence consists of two parts, subject and predicate.

The above features have been presented after intensive practice of sentences which manifest these findings. Thus we find that book three of the series of "Arabic for Life" presents grammar through the functional and inductively based approach, then outlines the rules, in a colour-coded fashion in a special chapter in the book. Book three, therefore, unlike the previous two books, summarises all the rules studied previously. As in book



one and two, book three also has a vocabulary glossary indicating the lesson and unit in which the words appeared. The book attempts to explain Islamic concepts by its choice of topics as the following list shows:-

الاسرة العربية - صلة الرحم - الخطبه.....الخ

Other topics cover general knowledge concerning Arab life and society including old traditions as well as contemporary and Islamic culture.

#### **- BOOK FOUR**

The fourth book of "Arabic for Life" has not yet been published in book form. It is more in the form of an anthology (but hopefully will soon be published in book form). This work appears to differ from the previous books in a variety of ways, both structurally, functionally and culturally, a fact which reflects the awareness on the part of the authors of the learner's varied and extensive experience of life in an Arab Muslim society and the vast pool of language materials available to him within and outside his course.

Therefore the content of the anthology is varied and consists of different topics to prepare the student for more intensive contact with the everyday Arabic language despite the lack of intensive vocabulary work and constructions. As well as general subjects, the book presents a great number of topics which cover Arabic-Islamic culture.

After presenting the subject, the source and author of the subject are mentioned. After displaying a variety of selection of drills and exercises, the book then draws attention to the value of the dictionary, recommending some of the most popular ones . The students are asked to write about certain subjects with recommended reference works and articles related to the subject. This book does not explain in detail grammatical points of style, but mentions them indirectly by drawing the learner's attention to them in introducing them, using this sentence: " لاحظ هذه الجملة " or notice such expressions as this style (وهزي اليك بجذع النخلة تساقط عليك رطباً جنياً) and so on.

This book considers oral and written work as well as vocabulary, constructions and expressions such as "a long period of time", "he lived from year such and such to year such and such", "what emerges by way of ideas", "The doctors stopped following traditional practice, "in addition to", "for this or that reason".

This book also presents a language game in each lesson to add enjoyment and pleasure to the learning process. It might be mentioned here that the fourth book of "Arabic for Life" does not contain visual aids. This may be because the student has reached the stage of being able to deal with abstract concepts and has reached a high standard of language skills.

## **- ARABIC - ITS SOUNDS AND LETTERS**

This book is also published by the Arabic Language Institute, Riyadh, Saudi-Arabia. As its name suggests, the book deals primarily with Arabic sounds and letters. This book was published at the request of many text-book writers who have pressed for teaching Arabic sounds as a separate topic. This book is very important because its aim is to enable the student to recognise and differentiate between the Arabic sounds which might cause difficulties to foreign learners.

The book consists of ten lessons representing the Arabic sounds and script. In other words the book is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the sounds - utilising the well-known technique of minimal pairs in displaying the differences between phonetically related entities. The second part deals with the corresponding Arabic symbols, paying attention to their form and shape in words. On examining the book, it appears that it tries to present sounds which are similar to those in the learner's language first. The first lesson in the book deals with long and short vowels which present very little, or no, difficulty to the learner.

In the second lesson the book presents sounds appearing in different parts of the word using perfect and imperfect verbs and pronouns. The authors claim that such features were chosen because of the pedagogic advantage of presenting the language in a simple way. Difficult sounds are introduced at the beginning of the third lesson. In the same lesson the

difference between gemination and the differentiation between kh and k, in addition to the short vowels are effectively presented. In the fourth lesson the book presents w - y and alif. These sounds are presented through words in such a manner that the sound under consideration comes at the beginning, the middle and at the end of the word respectively. In the fifth lesson the book presents lunar letters and solar letters accompanied by drills and exercises using compact and concise sentences for reading and writing purposes. The sixth lesson focuses on the difference between certain similar sounds such as q and k through the minimal pairs method. The seventh lesson presents التنوين and همزة الوصل and the difference between الألف المقصورة and الألف الممدودة while the eighth lesson presents the difference between التاء المربوطة and الهاء in addition to a revision exercise of previously studied material. The ninth lesson concentrates on practising similar and different sounds, long and short vowels, in addition to practising the reading and writing of the numbers from one to ten. The tenth and final lesson restricts itself to Arabic writing, and its different shapes. The book concludes with a test to assess the student's ability to recognise and produce Arabic sounds and letters.

The book "Arabic, its Sounds and Letters" is medium sized containing one hundred and seventy six hard wearing pages which contain beautiful, clear, and colourful pictures. "Arabic, its Sounds and Letters" is an important component in the integrated series of "Arabic for Life" books pioneered by the Arabic Language Institute at Riyadh.

## EASY ARABIC GRAMMAR

As its name indicates, the book "Easy Arabic Grammar" concentrates on grammar which is the basis for learning correct speech. There is still a tendency to teach grammar in the traditional way by the application of intensive drills and the explicit mastery of skills. However, the authors provide a variety of situations and communicatively relevant functions to teach the grammatical structures which fall in the scope of the book. Emphasis in this book is placed on drills and exercises to help inculcate the grammatical structures in the learner. Topics of cultural value contribute the thematic course of this book.

"Easy Arabic Grammar" is expected to be available for use only after the student has completed the first and second books of "Arabic for Life" mentioned previously. "Easy Arabic Grammar" consists of twenty five lessons each of which begins with a teachers' guide followed by an explanation of grammatical rules, repetition lessons and exercises. Each lesson ends with a summary of topics covered in the lesson concerned. After four or five lessons the book presents a revision exercise covering the previous lessons. This is in addition to general revision exercises at the end of the book. Items are presented through general Islamic and Arabic texts which cover literature, fiction and history etc.

## **- COMPOSITION FOR BEGINNERS**

This book came to fill a definite gap in the teaching materials at the Arabic Language Institute. The book concentrates on composition and is addressed only to those students who have mastered about nine hundred commonly used words in Arabic vocabulary. The aim is to teach composition in a direct way to enable the student to write free composition later.

The book "Composition for Beginners" consists of four stages. Stage one is named "The stage of Word and Picture" which presents sets of coloured pictures accompanied by words or sentences. This is to help the student describe the pictures in his own words, answering such questions as "What message does the picture convey?". "Name objects in the picture". "Form sentences using the following words" etc.

The second stage aims to help the student join and write complete sentences after being given two lists of words. The student might also be asked to fill in blank spaces or finish incomplete sentences. The ultimate objective of this stage is to have the student write a composition without the use of pictures.

Stage three consists of writing short stories with the help of clues and key words. The story can then be made up from filling in blank spaces in sentences, arranging sentences in a logical order or even changing the tense of the story. These stories are presented in such a way as to make the student's task both interesting and enjoyable.

Stage four asks the student to write about a certain topic chosen from a number of topics with the help of given words and expressions which encourage the student to write his own story.

The book "Composition for Beginners" contains one hundred and twenty eight shiny, smooth pages and was published by the Libraries of King Saud University Press, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

## **2.2 The Arabic Language Institutes in Saudi Arabia**

Learning a new language means learning a new culture, new concepts and the different way of life of the people of the target language. Nations usually spread their cultures by offering others the opportunity to learn their languages.

Arabic has been recognized as one of the most important languages from times of old to nowadays. The importance of Arabic is increasing with the importance of the Arab world, economically, culturally, religiously and strategically. For these reasons, the Arab governments have tried to offer good opportunities for learning Arabic to speakers of other languages. The government of Saudi Arabia has made its own contribution to the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language by establishing a number of institutes for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. In the following pages some light will be thrown on these institutes and their programmes.

### **2.2.1 Arabic Language Institute, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**

This institute began as a small unit for teaching Arabic in the Faculty of Arts in 1974. In the same year, a Royal Decree was issued for the foundation of an independent Institute for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. The first session began with 175 students, reaching 748 students in 1986.

#### **Goals of the Institute**

1. Teaching Arabic and Arabic culture to non-Arabic speakers.
2. Preparing experienced teachers in teaching Arabic as a foreign language.
3. Training teachers (in-service) in the field of teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages, including Arabic teachers who wish to be teachers of Arabic as a foreign language.
4. To conduct research in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language, including language and linguistic studies and the preparation of teaching materials.

To achieve these goals, the Arabic Language Institute has established four units. These are:-



### **- The language and culture unit**

This unit is concerned with the teaching of the Arabic language and its culture in two different sessions.

The morning session takes four terms (usually 2 years) in which the student studies thirty credit hours weekly. The students of this morning programme are those who are given scholarships by the government of Saudi Arabia. The scholarship includes a monthly salary, free accommodation and an annual plane ticket during the summer vacation.

The evening session, on the other hand, is for people who work for the Saudi Arabian government or with other entities in the country who want to learn Arabic for personal or business/career purposes. This evening study is free for those people who usually have higher degrees such as doctors, engineers, professors of universities and so on. In the evening period, the student studies six hours a week, covering the various elements of the Arabic language and the four skills intensively. This evening study began with 235 students representing 23 different nationalities. To the present day more than 2000 students have graduated from this evening programme.

### **- The Teacher Preparation Unit**

Students who have a university degree in Arabic or an equivalent

can join this unit in order to get a diploma in the methods of teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Students study ten different subjects in one year, covering theoretical and applied linguistics, in addition to other related subjects, for example education and psychology.

#### **- The In-Service Teacher Training Unit**

This unit is about 16 weeks long. Students study 30 hours weekly. The unit prepares and carries out specialised short term programmes for the training of teachers of Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

#### **- The Research Unit**

The research unit plans and conducts research on language, linguistics and educational studies related to the teaching of Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. Its work covers the production of teaching materials and teaching aids and the provision of follow-up on curricula. This is a very active unit, producing text-books and the text-book series are examined here in addition to research aimed at providing a better understanding of the teaching/learning process.

### **- Faculty members and Teachers**

In the Arabic Language Institute, there are numerous instructors drawn from various parts of the Arab world. There are about 11 members who have Ph.Ds and 52 language teachers with higher degrees or vocational qualifications below the Ph.D. level. The Ph.D. members usually teach in the teacher preparation and teacher training units. The majority of the staff members come from the Sudan and Egypt.

### **- Courses and Instruction**

Courses of different types are mounted in the different units of the institute. The language and culture unit has the largest number of students. There are two basic programmes; an intensive programme and a non-intensive one. In the intensive programme there are four levels and the duration of each level is one term of thirty hours a week, including one hour in the language laboratory and two hours a week of Quranic recitation. The courses of instruction are as follows:-

Level One:- Quranic recitation, language skills, listening comprehension, intensive and extensive reading, conversation skills, sounds and structures, and writing.

Level Two:- Quranic recitation, language skills, listening comprehension,

intensive and extensive reading, conversation, grammar and writing.

Level Three:- Quranic recitation, Islamic studies, listening comprehension, intensive and extensive reading, oral composition, writing composition, grammar, written practice and literature.

Level Four:- Quranic recitation, Islamic studies, listening comprehension, intensive and extensive reading, oral comprehension, writing compositions sounds and grammar, literature, and texts and rhetoric.

The non-intensive courses mentioned above are part-time programmes for students who are not on scholarships.

### **- Teaching Methods in the Intensive and Non-Intensive Courses of the Language Programme**

The Institute uses the direct method throughout its programmes; however translation is resorted to when it is absolutely necessary. Emphasis is placed on the four language skills and the teaching of functional grammar through intensive drills. At the advanced levels, formal lessons in phonology, morphology and syntax are given, in addition to lectures on literature and Islamic-Arabic culture.

Concerning courses in the unit of teacher preparation, a total of twenty four credit hours are required; fifteen credit hours are obligatory

courses and nine hours are electives, in addition to which there are a prerequisite six hours including general and Arabic linguistics, and education. The compulsory courses include Arabic morphology and syntax, contrastive and error analysis, methods of teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers, audio-visual aids and practice teaching. The electives include lexicography, psycho-linguistics, socio-linguistics, modern trends in applied linguistics, Arabic materials, topics in applied linguistics and language testing.

With regard to the in-service teacher-training unit, ten required courses have been offered. These should be completed in one semester (fifteen weeks) of intensive study. The total number of credit hours is twenty-five. These include Arabic grammar, oral composition, written composition, Arabic phonology, educational psychology, methods of teaching Arabic as a foreign language, teaching aids, class management, language tests, teaching practice and Islamic culture.

The above provides a general outline of the nature and types of programme found at the Arabic Language Institute.

### **- Admission Requirements**

(1) The language and culture unit:-

Students admitted to this unit should have:-

A. A minimum qualification of secondary school certificate.

B. For Muslim applicants a letter of recommendation from an Islamic Organization in his country.

C. For non-intensive programmes, approval of the applicant's sponsor is required.

(2) The teacher preparation unit:-

A. A minimum of a BA or equivalent with average grade of "Good" in Arabic with a major in Arabic or Islamic Study.

B. Proficiency in Arabic.

C. Familiarity with a foreign language, preferably English.

(3) The in-service teacher training unit:-

A. A minimum qualification of a secondary school certificate.

B. The applicant should be a teacher of Arabic at the time of application.

C. Proficiency in Arabic.

D. The applicant should not be over fifty years of age.

E. The applicant should be nominated by an Islamic or an official organization of his country.

#### **- Degrees Awarded by the Institute of Arabic**

A graduate of the language and culture unit is awarded a certificate of proficiency in the teaching of Arabic to non-Arabic speakers.

A graduate of the teacher preparation unit is awarded a diploma in the

methods of teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

A graduate of the teacher training unit is awarded a certificate of attendance.

### **- Teaching Aids**

The Arabic Language Institute has various materials and equipment for the simplification of teaching Arabic as a foreign language. These materials may be classified as follows:-

1. Tape recordings of some of the text-books used at the Institute.
2. Visual aids which include a whole library of magazines, pictures, photographs, maps, etc.
3. Audio-Visual aids, such as video-tapes, films which show Arabic-Islamic history and culture, etc.
4. Language laboratories in which the students listen to recorded materials such as Quranic recitation, listening comprehensions, texts of Arabic literature, etc.

### **- Number of Students**

Since the early years of the establishment of the Arabic Language Institute, there have been many applications for enrolment in the Arabic

Institute for the study of Arabic as a foreign language. In the academic year 1976, the institute had a total of 240 students. In 1978 364 students had enrolled in the Institute. Twenty of the latter were accepted in the unit of teacher preparation, thirteen were accepted in the unit of teacher training and the rest were accepted in the unit of language and culture. In 1981 there were (about) 659 students:- 37 in the teacher preparation unit; and the rest were in the unit of language and culture. In 1986 there were (about) 1025 students: nine of whom were accepted in the teacher preparation unit; forty four were accepted for the teacher training unit and the rest were accepted in the language and culture unit. In 1987 there were (about) 975 students in the Arabic Language Institute representing more than fifty different nations.

#### **- System of Evaluation**

Prospective students are required to take a placement test the result of which determines their level. In addition there are other tests such as class tests, final examinations and standardized tests.

Over and above the academic work which has been done in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the Arabic Language Institute, King Saud University has organized other activities such as the international symposium which was held in Riyadh in 1978 on the subject of teaching of Arabic as a foreign language. The outcome of this symposium has been



published in three volumes, the first of which deals with linguistic theories and the teaching of Arabic as a foreign language, the second volume discusses work in the field of teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages, and the third volume concentrates on issues related to the preparation of teachers and the production of teaching materials.

In addition, the Arabic Language Institute has promoted courses in Arabic as a foreign language abroad, for example in Malaysia (1977), Denmark (1979), London (1977), Gambia (1979) and the Philippines (1979).

The above outline gives a brief description of the structure and aim of the Arabic Language Institute, King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

### **2.2.2 The Arabic language Institute. The Islamic University of Imam Muhammad bin Saud**

This institute has been established for Muslims whose native tongue is not Arabic and who want to join the University of Imam Muhammad to study Islam and the Arabic language. The aim of this Institute is the preparation of students who require Arabic in order to be able to join the Arabic classes with the native speakers. The Arabic Language Institute used to be called the Centre for Teaching Arabic, but because of the increase in number of students the authorities decided to change this Centre to an Institute calling it the Arabic Language Institute of the University of Imam in 1981. This Institute has about 255 students, 36 instructors including 13

Ph.D. holders and a number of employees.

### **- Goals of the Institute**

Before talking about the objectives of the Arabic language institute one must give an idea of the goals of the University of Imam Muhammad itself. These include the following:-

1. Providing education in the field of Islamic, Arabic and Social Studies.
2. Promoting research on Islamic topics, establishing in this regard a close connection between the University of Imam and other universities which are interested in Islamic research.
3. The preparation of specialists such as judges and teachers.
4. Providing an opportunity for people from the Islamic countries to learn Arabic in Saudi Arabia.

### **- Aims of the Institute**

The aims of the Arabic Language Institute of Imam University can be outlined as follows:-

1. Teaching Arabic to beginners to a level that enables them to join classes at the University.
2. Providing students with some knowledge of Islamic culture.
3. Preparation of teachers of Arabic as a foreign language.

4. Promoting linguistic and pedagogical research concerning teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages.

#### **- Courses of Instruction**

The Arabic Language Institute of the Imam University has an intensive programme. The student studies twenty five hours weekly from 7 a.m. until 12 noon for five days.

The Arabic Language Institute consists of the following departments:-

1. **The language department**

This department comprises two programmes:-

- A. An intensive programme in which the student studies 100 credit hours for two years, 23 hours of Islamic subjects and 77 hours of Arabic. The graduate of this department is awarded a diploma in the Arabic language.
- B. The evening programme for those members of the expatriate community who wish to learn Arabic for whatever reasons. The duration of this programme is two years with an average of 6 hours per week.

2. **Special Diploma Programme**

In this programme, the student studies 14 different subjects covering various aspects of the Arabic language and Islam for one academic year with an average of 20 hours per week, providing that the applicant has a BA in Arabic or an equivalent.

**- Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies**

This department offers programmes for purely religious purposes. Students in this programme study a number of Arabic and Islamic subjects, including tuition on general linguistic studies and research methods. After the completion of that programme, which lasts two years, the graduate is given a diploma in Arabic and Islamic studies.

**- MA Programme in Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language**

The Arabic Language Institute of Imam University is the only Institute in Saudi Arabia which offers a programme in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. The applicant studies 25 credit hours in addition to producing an extended piece of research in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language or the field of applied linguistics.

An applicant admitted to this programme, which lasts at least one year, is required to have a BA in Arabic or an equivalent with an average grade of "v. good".

### **- Teacher Preparation Programme**

The Arabic Language Institute offers one term of study for native Arabic speakers who wish to teach Arabic to non-Arabic speakers. The applicant studies 20 credit hours including Arabic, teaching methods, and teaching aids and materials.

### **- Short Term Course for the Preparation of Teachers Abroad**

The aim of this course is the preparation of people who come to Saudi Arabia to specialize in the teaching of Arabic in their native countries. The intensive programme concentrates on the Arabic language and teaching methodology. The duration of this course is two months and the applicants should have a minimum qualification of a High School certificate.

### **2.2.3 Arabic Language Institute of Umm Al-Qura University**

The Arabic Language Institute of Umm Al-Qura University offers Arabic language teaching courses with the following objectives:-

1. Teaching the Arabic language and its literature to non-Arabic speakers

who aim to join the colleges of Umm Al-Qura University.

2. Preparing and training teachers who are interested in teaching Arabic as a foreign language.
3. Writing and publishing research on the development of curricula and teaching methods in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

**- The Institute of Umm Al-Qura has two major departments**

1. The department for Arabic Language Teaching. This is the main department in the Institute. Students study in this department for three years with an average of 25 credit hours each term. Students graduate from this department after the completion of 150 credit hours on Arabic and Islam.
2. The department of Pedagogy. This department has two sections.
  - A. A teacher preparation section in which the student studies 25 credit hours in each of 4 terms for two years. The students graduate from this section after gaining 100 credit hours.
  - B. The Special diploma section. This section is for training teachers who wish to specialise in teaching Arabic as a foreign language. It is for non-Arabic teachers who taught Arabic before but want to extend their experience in this field. The duration of study in this section is one year. Students study different subjects covering various aspects of Arabic as a foreign language including Islamic

various aspects of Arabic as a foreign language including Islamic studies and pedagogical issues.

The previous description of the programmes of the Arabic Language Institutes in Saudi Arabia shows the similarity between them in objectives, teaching methods, courses of instruction and admission requirements. It also shows the determined and commendable efforts of the government of Saudi Arabia in the field of teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

### **2.3 SERIES OF ARABIC FOR BEGINNERS**

Before analysing the first book of the series of Arabic for Beginners, which will be central to the study of this thesis, an outline of the series as a whole should be given to help understand the nature of the books and how they relate to each other. Arabic for Beginners consists of six books for both the student and the teacher. Each book comprises six grades or levels. The series aims to enable the student to communicate both orally and in written form with the following aims in mind:-

1. To understand the language as spoken by native speakers.
2. To speak Arabic in fluent manner.
3. To be able to read and understand the themes and ideas of written works.
4. To be able to express oneself by writing Modern Standard Arabic in a comprehensible manner.
5. To recognise both Arabic Islamic and general culture.

6. To master the vocabulary, sounds and constructions of the language.

Regarding the linguistic content, the series pays attention to the Arabic sound system including vowels, consonants, stress and intonation when sounds are taught independently.

When presenting vocabulary the series considers the frequency, simplicity, type/function, content, abstract, or concrete nature and importance of the words offered.

Dealing with the syntactic system, the series involves two frames.

- A. **The Functional Frame.** This frame presents the language very clearly, with drills and exercises showing that language should be used for communication purposes and not just memorised. All the books therefore contain many drills and exercises.
- B. **The Theoretical Frame.** This frame covers the theory of Arabic grammar, such as dividing the words into noun, verb and particle while dividing the verb into "أمر", "مضارع", "ماضي".

The introduction of traditional grammar is presented at the beginning of the fourth book, while the fifth and sixth books cover this in more detail. The authors of the series believe that the pure grammar is an integral part of the functional grammar which appears in the first book of the series. Teaching points have been presented for the following reasons:-

1. Arabic is taught by the interaction and inter-relation of skills and elements, and there should be set targets to achieve planned levels of



listening, speaking, reading and writing suited to the students' level of comprehension of the nature and function of sounds, grammar and vocabulary.

2. The series adopts the oral approach, on the argument that the reason being that language is mainly spoken.

The authors therefore concentrate more on listening and speaking in the first two books. Reading and writing skills nevertheless are not neglected as these follow, the listening and speaking skills.

The texts of the series are presented in different ways such as dialogues, reading texts and texts in the form of plays. These texts fall into the following three categories:

1. Texts which are specifically written by the authors themselves and appear in the first two books of the series.
2. Texts adapted from already published materials; these appear in the third and fourth books.
3. Original texts, which appear in the fifth and sixth books.

The first two books contain completely vocalized texts while the third and fourth books contain partly vocalized ones. The fifth and sixth books contain non-vocalized texts. At this stage, the student can then study newspapers and magazines which are non-vocalized.

The series depends on audio-visual aids, the main one being pictures which play an important role in teaching foreign languages including especially Arabic, which here is taught by the direct method.

It is worth mentioning that the design of units varies from book to book depending on the ultimate goal set by the teacher.

Each book of the series of Arabic for Beginners consists of six units, the last unit being a revision of the previous units.

The first book comprises thirty dialogue texts, eight reading texts, four hundred and forty five words and one hundred and ten constructions, while the second book consists of fifty dialogue texts, twenty-five reading texts, ninety-six constructions and grammatical items and four hundred and ten vocabulary items and expressions. The third book comprises twelve dialogue texts, twelve reading texts, ninety-eight grammatical constructions plus three hundred and fifty words and expressions. The fourth book contains twenty-five texts, eighteen of which are reading texts while the remainder are dialogue texts plus one text in the form of a play. There are sixty grammatical items and four hundred words.

The fifth and sixth books are for the higher levels and consist of thirty reading texts in addition to intensive and comprehensive reading material ending in a text in the form of a play or story.

As previously mentioned, the fifth and sixth books concentrate on theoretical grammar by studying texts and plays written by famous Arabic writers using one thousand words to help the student understand and acquire knowledge of the Arabic language and its culture.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **THE THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

#### **3.1 TEACHING THE ARABIC SOUNDS AND THE TEXT-BOOK OF**

##### **TEACHING ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

When we, as native speakers, listen to foreigners speaking Arabic we may encounter difficulties with what they are saying, not because of any lack of vocabulary or incorrect sentence construction, but rather because of their mispronunciation of sounds and their unexpected intonations and stresses. Therefore, it is not enough for a novice to learn words, phrases and grammatical rules only - they also have to know how to form and produce sounds correctly.

In teaching a student how to speak Arabic correctly it is usual to teach them first proper speaking and listening skills. This is because the most effective learning is best achieved through the repetition of correctly produced sounds and words. Unfortunately, this aspect has not been emphasised. Among the many topics which will be discussed in this section, some of the most important, those discussing the objectives of teaching sounds and the recognition and discrimination of sounds, will be considered. We shall also examine in some detail the teaching of sounds as a separate stage and their presentation.

##### **3.1.1 The Objective of Teaching the Arabic Sounds**

Considering the fact that it is often difficult for a foreigner to approximate closely the sounds of a native speaker, the ultimate aim in teaching Arabic sounds should be their correct pronunciation. A foreign student will usually pronounce the Arabic sounds in a manner resembling the native's, but they will still have their foreign accent. This phenomenon is not restricted to Arab students, but, rather is a trait common to all foreign language students.

To achieve success in teaching Arabic to non native speakers it is important for the teacher to make use of the three styles of instruction as described by طعيمة (1985:175). These styles are:-

- A. **Prescriptive Teaching:** This approach seeks to make clear the differences between sounds in the students' native language and the target language which, in this case, is Arabic. The new student tends to pronounce sounds in the two languages in a similar manner, ignoring the actual differences in stress and accent. In this style, the teachers'role is to minimise the language and sound differences between the two sound systems.
- B. **Productive Teaching:** The object in productive teaching is for the students to acquire knowledge and familiarity with the Arabic sounds which do not exist in their native tongue. The teacher's primary role is to ensure the student is pronouncing the sounds correctly.
- C. **Descriptive Teaching:** This aspect of instruction is geared more towards the nature of the sounds themselves. It gives the student knowledge of sounds, proper articulation and their functions as well as their various features and characteristics. In other words, this method

concentrates on phonetics and sound patterns.

When distinguishing between a student's native phonemes and their sounds and Arabic phonemes and sounds, the novice should always understand that sounds produced by the native speakers will be different from those produced by foreign counterparts. This point is of vital importance when learning Arabic. Generally speaking, the order in which the teaching of Arabic sounds takes place will depend upon the objectives of the given programme. Programmes designed to teach reading and writing skills are different from those geared toward improving personal speaking skills; accordingly, the emphasis on Arabic sounds varies from programme to programme.

### **3.1.2 Teaching Sounds Theoretically**

When teaching the Arabic sounds, it is often helpful for teachers to give full details and explanations regarding the nature of sounds and their articulation. Many text-books therefore present Arabic words and sounds with accompanying explanations about the production of sounds which often include: the position of the vocal cords, voiced and non voiced sounds, the function of given sounds and so on.

However, there is some speculation about the importance of including such in-depth detail when explaining sounds. In this respect, حسين (1983:62), believes that teaching the theory of sounds is not advantageous to the learning process. It seems to me that teaching Arabic sounds practically is a much better idea. Text-book writers and teachers should pay more attention to the production of sounds by emphasising practice and repetition since such methods usually lead to better

pronunciation and learning.

### **3.1.3 The Arabic Sounds**

In Arabic, there are thirty-four distinct sounds which include the long and short vowels as well as consonants. The short vowels are not represented by symbols in the written form of the language but signs may be inserted as distinct marks. The Arabic vowels consist of short "u", short "i" and short "a" in addition to long "a" and long "u" and long "i". The difference between the long vowels and the short vowels can be shown in the following examples:-

سمح ، سامح  
معلمو ، معلم  
مساكين ، مساكن

It must be noted that using one vowel in the place of another changes the meaning of the word. Therefore there is a difference between the meaning of قدم which means "he came" and قديم which means "became old". Similarly, there is also a difference in the meanings of صدق (he told the truth) and صادق (he became a friend). In relation to this, it is common for Arabic teachers to pay slight attention to the difference between short and long vowels though its neglect frequently leads to serious learning problems. In my experience, words like

ولد - والد  
مسافر الليل - مسافرو الليل

could cause confusion to students who are not familiar with the Arabic sound system. حسين (1983:34) maintains that the reason

some non-native Arabic speakers sound different to natives is not because of improper construction or word choice but rather because of the difficulty of certain sounds.

The Arabic sound system is not restricted to the consonants and vowels. There are other features which play an important role in the teaching of sounds. Intonation, for example, is a very important feature. If one gives a sentence different intonations, it will obviously give different meanings. The wrong intonation will lead to misinterpreting the meaning of a sentence. A sentence such as جاء أبوك (your father came) could, depending on the intonation, be an interrogative, a warning, a statement, mockery or surprise.

Stress is another aspect that must be taken into account when teaching Arabic as a foreign language. There is no doubt that most languages use the instrument of stress and intonation but in some languages, stress can actually affect the very meaning of a given word. For example, in English, stress may change the meaning of words from noun to verb, so words like "increase" or "exercise" could be pronounced as verbs or nouns. In teaching Arabic to non-natives, a difficulty arises in this respect in that each country uses stress in a different manner. In other words, stress differs from area to area whether in standard Arabic or dialects. Since our concern as teachers and text-book writers is to teach the sounds correctly, a key element is ensuring that students know that pronouncing certain words incorrectly will lead to a change in their meaning. This is what حسين means when he says (1983:39) that the Arabic language has function stress and unfunction stress. Stress changes which do not lead to changes in meaning are of less importance.

Juncture (pause) is another element which must be taken into

account when teaching Arabic to non-natives. Unfortunately, this is another aspect that is often not given adequate attention by teachers. The pause plays an important role in changing the meaning of a particular context. It is a well known fact that Arabic scholars are especially cognizant of employing the pause when reading the Holy Quran. The pause will indicate different things depending on stops and emphases. The following examples can have different meanings because of the emphasis on certain words or syllables.

( الم ذلك الكتاب لاريب ، فيه هدى للمتقين )

( الم ذلك الكتاب لاريب فيه ، هدى للمتقين )

( بإذن ربهم من كل امر ، سلام هي حتي مطلع الفجر )

( بإذن ربهم من كل امر سلام ، هي حتي مطلع الفجر )

It is clear that the pause affects the meaning of the context. This is especially true in the case of poetry. This example takes on different meanings according to the position of the pause

عضنا الدهر بناه — ليت ماحل بناه

عضنا الدهر بناه — ليت ماحل بنا . به

Even in everyday, normal speech, use of the pause is important in changing the meanings of sentences. The following two sentences have different meanings because of the pause:-

1. I stopped by the road of the new airport

2. I stopped by the new road of the airport

مررت بطريق المطار الجديد

مررت بطريق المطار . الجديد

In the first sentence, the pause indicates that the airport is new while in the second the pause indicates that the road is new. When teaching



Arabic to non-natives, it is clear that if the pause is not taken into account much confusion will result.

#### **3.1.4 Problems Which Face Non-Native Arabic Students**

When learning a new language it is common for difficulties to arise. This is certainly not unusual in the case of Arabic. Before problems have had a chance to take root it is beneficial for the teacher and student to discover them and correct them. In contemporary Arabic instruction there are currently two methods: contrastive analysis and error analysis. The first method claims that all errors and mistakes occur because of the differences between the native language and the target language. Error analysis on the other hand concentrates more on the system of the target language, in the right usage of analogies or on inadequate teaching and instruction. The fact is, however, that there is usually more than one or two difficulties in teaching non natives. There are differences in the sounds of both languages, the differences between systems, the differences in teaching methods, the differences in quality of teaching materials (especially the text-books) and drills and exercises. In regard to this point, **طو** and **عبد** (1968) said that, "Non native speakers usually do not hear the unfamiliar sounds properly, and if they do, they may not be able to pronounce them correctly. Their pronunciation needs to be corrected continuously and on the spot. It is much harder to correct wrong habits than to create right ones". Another problem that may face Arabic students is the different pronunciations of particular words in Arabic. One notices that certain sounds are pronounced differently according to the background and birth-place of the instructor. For example, the letter (ج) is pronounced

differently by an Egyptian teacher and a Syrian teacher. Moreover, some sounds have taken on different pronunciation over time. The sounds Th-Dh-and'd' changed in some Arab countries to S and Z. In certain cases the sound "th" changes to "t" or "dh" and the sound "d" will change to "z". It is common to hear people saying

ضابط instead of رابط  
الضالين instead of الظالين  
ذهب instead of ذهب

In addition, the sound "q" is often pronounced by Sudanese teachers as a "gh" and the sound " j " is pronounced in some Gulf areas as y ( ي ). To speakers not familiar with the Arabic language, the different pronunciation of particular sounds and words could easily lead to confusion. This is something that instructors must be aware of. It is not hard to imagine the students' perplexity when the teacher says to his pupils, "This pen is called

قلم meaning غلم  
or إستقلال instead of إستغلال

The confusion is doubled when the teacher explains that the sound "th" is produced by placing part of the tongue in front of the mouth, and consequently mistakenly gives the description of the sound "s". Such a procedure presents sounds in an incorrect and ugly manner. حسان (1984) believes that some of the reasons this mistake occurs include the following: the carelessness and insecurity of the teacher; the teacher is not properly qualified and does not want to show weakness in front of the students. Besides the teacher's faults (external) may also be inner and internal problems. These result from the sounds themselves. It is well known that Arabic produces a great number of sounds which are not found in other

languages. These sounds often cause difficulty for those students not acquainted with Arabic. Often a student will pronounce an Arabic sound in a way similar to how it would sound in his native language when the particular sound should be spoken quite differently. This also happens when Arabic speakers attempt to speak English. They say 'bark' instead of 'park', 'shapter' instead of 'chapter' and 'ferymuch' instead of 'very much'. In this respect, الغريبي (1986:70) believe that sounds that are similar in both the target and native language are much more difficult to memorise and learn than those which occur only in Arabic. This is because the student will pay more attention to the unique Arabic sounds, paying less attention to those that sound nearly the same in his native tongue and Arabic.

حسان (1984) writes that the pronunciation of the teacher is important. He says that:-

- (1) The teachers should whenever possible, use the modern, standard Arabic with an emphasis on correct pronunciation. In this scenario the teacher will act as a model for the students.
- (2) In informal situations, the student should not mix with the teacher when the teacher is using his local dialect, especially if the teacher is from a different Arab country.
- (3) The Arab League, with its many multilateral organisations, should adopt comprehensive plans to find solutions to the problem of dialects and pronunciations.

Regarding a situation wherein many nationalities are represented in a single classroom, it has been suggested that using contrastive analysis can be helpful. However, in reality, such a procedure may be difficult, if not impossible. This is because its application requires knowledge of the various languages and how their sounds interfere with proper Arabic

pronunciation. It seems to me that here the best solution is for the teacher to group together all the students who speak one particular language, quickly assess their mistakes, and take steps to correct them.

It must be borne in mind that the grouping of students is not always possible because there may be only two or three non native students from any one linguistic background.

### **3.1.5 Teaching the Arabic Sounds**

To non-native students of Arabic, the proper teaching of sounds is of the utmost importance. This instruction will vary between schools, teachers and their philosophies. Various ways of teaching sounds would include:-

- (a) Directly showing how each sound is formed with a full description.
- (b) Sounds can be presented by using meaningful words, practising them and their individual sounds in isolation without giving a full description of that particular sound.

Whatever method is used, certain basic factors must always be recognised when teaching Arabic. One is that there is a relation between the native language sounds and Arabic sounds. In this respect, الناقه and طعيمه (1984:42) say that sounds can be classified according to three categories. These are:-

1. Identical Sounds:- Identical sounds are those that sound the same or nearly the same in Arabic and the student's native language.
2. Similar Sounds:- These are sounds which have some degree of similarity in Arabic and the native tongue.
3. Different Sounds:- This refers to those sounds native to Arabic and

not found in any of the languages of the learners.

The aim in teaching "identical" sounds is to reinforce learning the sounds and present them with the "similar" and "different" sounds. When learning "similar" sounds, the student is able to understand the exact difference between the similar sounds of his native tongue and Arabic. Teaching the "different" sounds leads to a student's learning and perfecting the new and unfamiliar sounds.

In teaching the various sounds, it has to be clear that recognition, discrimination and abstraction are useful techniques for teachers to use. Recognition means that the intended sound is presented to the pupil in different parts of the word (bearing in mind that some Arabic sounds can take different shapes according to their place in the particular word). Sound discrimination is another useful element. It becomes important when words have the sounds such as those with a q and k or t. It is recommended that sound discrimination be conducted in conjunction with the "minimal pairs" technique in which two words have the same sounds. Examples are 'سار' and 'صار', 'قلب' and 'كلب', 'طاب' and 'تاب' and so on. In deciding whether to use meaningful or meaningless words when using the minimal pairs approach, حسين (1983:103) believes that meaningless words can be used since the aim is simply the recognition and discrimination of sounds.

On the other hand, there are those who insist that meaningful words be used in presenting Arabic. In relation to this, الغريبي (1986:76) claims that filling the student mind with meaningless words is not a proper procedure, since such words remain in the mind for a lengthy time because of the intensive practice and drills. The drawback in this is that meaningful and meaningless words can become mixed when the student's Arabic improves. Indeed, the Arabic language is full of derived meaningful words, therefore

the teacher and text-book writer have no excuse for using meaningless words, even in the oral stage of teaching where more attention has to be paid to the sounds themselves.

### **3.1.6 Transliteration**

Transliteration refers to the conventional system that gives written symbols to each sound in a language. This system is often used when learning a new language to help with the difficulty of forming and learning new sounds. In the case of Arabic, there are different opinions about the value of transliteration. On the one hand, linguists endorse its use, claiming that it helps students to recognise and articulate sounds clearly. In turn, it will give them a degree of self-confidence which will then enable them to learn the more difficult aspects of Arabic much more easily الحديدي (1967:112).

On the other hand, many educators and text-book writers are united in their opposition to transliteration when teaching Arabic to non-natives. يونس (1978:152) writes that,

"transliteration leads to ambiguity and misunderstanding. There is no agreement among linguists and educators about which one of the different systems should be used. Transliteration is not recommended because the new student has to use and think in the target language including its written system".

طعيبة (1985:178) is not in favour of using transliteration in Arabic text-books. He believes that it can create unnecessary teaching/learning problems rather than aiding the learning process.

On balance, it seems that using a transliteration system when

teaching Arabic does not add any significant benefit. Arabic symbols are obviously better than any other symbols. This is especially true for non-Arabic students. Irving believes that part of the difficulty about the Arabic language lies in using transliteration which to a large extent is used as an alternative to using the Arabic symbols (Cited by **يونس** 1978:153).

### **3.1.7 Teaching Sounds as an Independent Stage**

When placing emphasis on teaching sounds, there is often a tendency to teach them at a separate component in the course of instruction. In this component, the students listen to and speak Arabic concentrating only on sounds. No written words will appear either in Arabic or any other language. In light of the fact that in learning a language it is not only listening to what the teacher says but also producing the words that have been said, at this component the student begins to be able to recognise and discriminate between sounds. This component helps them to produce sounds, words and sentences by using pictures in text-books as well as objects in the classroom.

Despite this method's obvious importance in the teaching of sounds, there is another point of view which claims that merely teaching sounds by themselves is not useful. **حسين** (1983:58) says that teaching meaningless sounds is not to be recommended. He advocates instead the presentation of sounds through meaningful conversations and readings. In such scenarios, students will acquire and understand sounds much more quickly and use them in a more natural way. However, it seems that teaching sounds as an independent stage with intensive practice is much more advantageous.

Teaching sounds by conversation and short readings will only add an

extra burden to the student's learning process. In this case the student would have to discriminate between the sounds and the meaning of the conversation and context as well. To be on the safe side, sounds should be taught as an independent component before the student starts learning the language itself.

### **3.1.8 Text-Book and Teaching Sounds**

There is no doubt that a good standard text-book leads to better learning. Therefore it is desirable to have a book which deals with language skills and their related elements. The following points are those which should be included in any standard text.

1. The text-book must treat sounds independently of other subjects (grammar, spelling, reading, writing etc.).
2. In this "independent" stage, it is desirable to examine how certain characteristics (interrogative, exclamation, intonation, stress, pauses, etc.) relate to sounds. These characteristics have more in common with sounds than vocabulary and construction.
3. Pictures and other audio-visual aids are useful in the teaching of sounds, especially if words and symbols are not being used. It is important that pictures be clean and straight forward and that they indicate the intended thing. Any mistake or ambiguity with the images can lead to negative learning.
4. The distribution of sounds in the book should be divided with care. Some texts do distribute them carefully while others are careless. Sound instruction should be presented in the beginning, middle and end in a thorough, systematic manner taking into account the fact that the



pronunciation of sounds differs according to their places in the word.

### **3.1.9 Conclusion and Criteria**

Teaching sounds should be carefully planned in any language instruction programme since sounds play a major role in forming constructions and in pronunciation. As a living language, Arabic has its own unique sounds which distinguish it from other tongues and can cause difficulties to those unfamiliar with it.

This section has shed some light on the problems of teaching sounds to non Arabic students. We have seen the importance of teaching sounds as an independent activity and acknowledging its importance as the time when students concentrate on recognition and discrimination through meaningful or meaningless words (regardless of the meaning or context). The objective of teaching sounds has also been discussed. We have also examined certain characteristics of language (intonation, stress, pause), these being so important that they cannot be safely ignored. Problems which result from language interference in the native or target language have also been examined. The issue of transliteration and its usefulness in teaching students has also been touched upon.

The core of this work is the text-book for teaching Arabic. In such a book sounds should obviously be presented. Other issues which should be treated include the proper distribution of sounds throughout the book, emphasis on problem sounds (especially those unique to Arabic) and the abstraction of sounds.

Important points which, on evaluation of texts, should be kept in mind when examining the usefulness of any particular text-book would most

certainly include the following:-

1. Does the book present sounds as an independent component?
2. Does the book use the transliteration system?
3. Has the book been prepared with certain nationalities in mind?
4. Is the section on abstraction of sounds clear and understandable?
5. Are sounds taught by using meaningful or meaningless words?
6. Are sounds presented using the minimal pairs approach?
7. Are sounds presented in words or individually?
8. Are words presented through words familiar to the student?
9. Is there more than one difficult sound presented in a single word?
10. Does the book make use of intonation, stress and other lingual characteristics?
11. Do the pictures and illustrations assist the student to learn Arabic effectively?
12. Does the book place emphasis on those sounds which cause difficulty to Arabic students?
13. Are the words used taken from everyday situations?
14. Does the book achieve the objective of teaching Arabic sounds?

These criteria are simply guidelines to use for those who are interested in evaluating and analysing text-books for Arabic students. The personal experience and opinion of the reviewer should not be ignored either.

### **3.2 THE VOCABULARY OF THE TEXTBOOK FOR TEACHING**

#### **ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

It is a fact that language is composed of a number of systems:-

- (1) phonology which deals with the formal functioning units of any language;
- (2) morphology which deals with the structure of words of a language;
- (3) syntax which deals with sentence structure; and
- (4) semantics which deals with the meaning of words and combination of words. These factors are integrated and any separation of them is purely for analytical or educational purposes.

For native speakers, language acquisition comes naturally and unconsciously, but foreign learners need concentrated efforts to learn and apply the language. At the age of twelve, a native speaker is expected to know approximately 135,000 words in his language. Foreign students, however, hardly obtain the minimum professional proficiency despite spending around 4500 hours studying the target language (Amayreh 1984).

There is almost complete agreement about the importance of teaching vocabulary. More emphasis has been placed on teaching language as a means of communication than on structure and grammar. So in the last few decades the teaching of vocabulary received more attention after the recognition of the communicative importance of words. Edward Allen and Rebecca Valette state that "regardless of the specific target language and the condition of instruction, vocabulary is an important factor in all language teaching" (Allen and Valette 1977).

### **3.2.1 Word and Meaning**

The qualified text-book writer ought to realize that the meanings of words are not the same in all languages. Meanings have links with experience and culture. Lack of experience of the appropriate context may make the meaning of the words extremely difficult to understand. Bright and McGregor, (1970:16) noticed that "mist" and "fog" are unknown words in Khartoum. So the words "mist" and "fog" are difficult to understand. The meaning of "camel" in Arabic and Urdu are different. It may also be difficult to find the exact equivalent word for "snow" in Eskimo because this language has many different names for this substance.

Social and cultural aspects play an important role in conveying the meaning of words. A "family" is not necessarily "mother and father", because in the Arabic culture it could mean "wife". The text-book writer could mislead foreign students when he presents to them the structure without explaining the background of the cultural meaning of this and other such linguistic items.

There is a notion that students make mistakes because they do not hear and receive the actual meaning of words. In relationship to construction and meaning, the text-book writer may decide not to deal with some important elements because they might confuse the learner. For example, the difference between "بيت الرجل", "the man's house" and "رجل البيت", "the man of the house", may prove difficult to the student. However, this is a simple distinction for the native speaker or even the author himself who is responsible for choosing items for inclusion in the text-book.

Some words could have more than one meaning in the target

language of the foreign learner. The word "maktaba" could mean in Arabic either 'library' or 'bookshop'. This may be the reason why many Arab students say, "I am going to the library to buy a book". This is of utmost importance for the text-book writer. He must distinguish between these words in his book so the students do not face unnecessary problems. Similarly, the word "سيارة" which, in the Holy Quran, means "caravan", has today the meaning of "car". The Muslim scholars differentiate between the words "لغة" and "اصطلاح", according to Seiny (1982).

Many authors include extensive vocabulary lists in their books without giving consideration to the different meanings of individual words. The word "عين" could mean "thing", "spy", "the head of a tribe", "water spring" or "a person's eye". The clever textbook writer would employ the most commonly used definition of this word, aware that the beginning student cannot easily learn many meanings for single words.

The evocative meaning of words must be dealt with carefully. This evocative meaning differs from person to person, and from culture to culture, according to personal experiences and beliefs. In this respect, Alkholy claims that while the word, "cow" indicates "holy creature" to the Hindu people and "a symbol of good" for the farmers, it is still an ugly creature to a child who is kicked by one (الخولي, 1982:95). Also the word "عيسى" ("Jesus") can be shown in any written text in Arabic as merely a name. But to the Christian believers, it is something different.

It is clear that the text-book author should seriously consider the previous points to promote effective learning linguistically and psychologically.

### **3.2.2 Active and Passive Vocabulary**

In teaching foreign language vocabulary, an important distinction should be made between active words and passive words. Those learning a foreign language are usually able to recognize many more words than they can actually produce. The active vocabulary includes those words which the learner understands, pronounces correctly, and uses correctly in speaking and writing. On the other hand, the passive words are those which the student recognizes and understands when they occur in context, but which he cannot produce correctly himself. According to Wallace (1984), the production of a word is much more difficult because the learner has to pronounce it or spell it the right way, use it in the correct grammatical form, and use it in correct relation to the words preceding and following it. طعيمه (1985) claims that the circle of understanding is wider than the circle of production, since the learner understands more words than he uses. Concerning the teaching of the active and passive words, it is believed that in the first stage (level) of learning the new language, most of the words will be passive. But in the intermediate and advanced levels, those words become active as the student achieves greater knowledge of the new language. On the other hand, the passive words could become active depending on the subject matter or situation, as الخولي and صيني believe. For example, the word, "visit a doctor", can be an active word in one situation such as "a visit to the doctor". It could, however, be passive in a situation like "a visit to the zoo", because in the first case, the word "doctor" has primary use, while it might have a secondary use in the other case. In other words, words can be used as a basic element in some situations while the same word might not be so important in another situation.

Here it should be mentioned that active vocabulary exists in writing, more than in speech, because, in writing, the student has enough time to choose his vocabulary quite freely, considering the fact that writing is more formal than speaking. Therefore, the students need a wider vocabulary from which to choose. It is important for the text-book writer to illustrate how passive and active vocabulary can be taught and used to avoid mistakes. In this respect, صيني (1982) believes that failing to use the active and passive words correctly may explain why students make errors when they speak and write. That means that the author of the text-book should clarify which vocabulary is for production and which words are merely for recognition.

### **3.2.3 Structure and Content Words**

There is a basic kind of distinction between structure words and content words. Michael Wallace claims that structure words must be considered a part of the grammar of the language, stating that "they are almost empty of meaning when considered in isolation". For example, the word "هل" in "هل تذهب الآن" functions as a marker of question form and as a marker of tense. The structure words often include prepositions, conjunctions, pronouns, auxiliaries, negative particles, etc. Content words, on the other hand, are nouns, verbs and adjectives which contribute significant meaning to the sentence.

It is essential to mention that structure words and content words are both very important in teaching vocabulary, since it is impossible to speak or write without both. Mackey (1965:195) points out that structure words in the right places make a home in which the rest of the language is

based. This could be true in the case of teaching the Arabic language to non-Arabic speakers, especially when the learner misunderstands the difference between some expression such as "رغب في" ("wished") and "رغب عن" ("gave up"), or "جر" ("pull") and "جر إلى" ("led to"), etc. As a result, structure and content words should be a matter of prime consideration in text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

### **3.2.4 Selection of Vocabulary**

It is a fact that it is impossible for a student who is learning a foreign language to understand the whole vocabulary of that language. Even the native speaker cannot master the whole vocabulary of his own language. One cannot ignore Mackey's point of view when he states that "a learner often memorizes as many as 12,000 words in order to be able to understand a particular one thousand words. This is because there is no relationship between the wide selection of vocabulary offered and the limited purposes of the learner" (Mackey, 1965:161). If this is the case, the selection of vocabulary should be taken into account to make learning more productive and effective. But how should the selection of vocabulary be made?

Differences between two languages can be established by contrastive linguistic analysis between the native language and the target language. Linguists vary, however, in their opinions concerning validity of the contrastive analysis approach.

The application of this theory would be useful if the text-book is prepared for one nationality, but if the book is produced for persons of many different nationalities (such as is the case in teaching Arabic as a foreign language in the Arabic Language Institute in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia where



there are students of 64 different nationalities), the application of contrastive analysis will be very difficult because of the wide range of the students' native languages.

There is a tendency toward finding criteria on which to base the word selection for teaching foreign languages. Mackey suggests that frequency, range, availability, and learnability are very important factors to be considered in preparing a text-book on teaching a foreign language (Mackey, 1965:176). Corder believes that the utility, difficulty, and simplicity of potential vocabulary words are the most important factors in selecting teaching items. He suggests that we have to examine the dialects of the target language itself and choose the words most frequently used in preparing materials for teaching a foreign language (Corder, 1974). As a third option, Halliday suggests that teachability and class needs should be taken into account as criteria for the selection of teaching course material (Halliday, 1964:204). According to صيني (1982:119), the previous criteria can be classified into the following categories:-

(1) **Utility:-** This is decidedly the most important factor. It includes coverage, range, and availability.

(a) **Coverage:** Obviously, the element which covers many usages is more important than elements which cover limited usages. For example, the expression, "كيف الحال" is more comprehensive than "كيف حالك", "كيف حالكن", or "كيف حالكما" because it covers a number of usages. It can be used for children or adults, singular or plural, masculine or feminine.

The word, "باب" is more comprehensive than "بوابه" "gate", because it could include a number of usages such as "ابواب الكتاب" and also "باب الدار - باب الرزق".

Therefore, such words should take priority.

- (b) **Availability:** Certain words happen to be the most appropriate for certain situations. Halliday offers the example of classroom needs. He expresses the view that often repeated classroom words such as "blackboard" and "chalk" are very necessary for the learner and must be included in the vocabulary, even though they are not frequently used words in other situations. صيني, on the other hand, believes that such words are not necessary for foreign language text-books. He thinks students will learn those words naturally as the teacher uses them in classroom routine (صيني 1982).
- (c) **Range:** Words which can be found in different situations are more important than words which can be found in particular situations, for example, scientific texts or others which deal with specific subjects. The items of widest range are generally structure words, certain types of adverbs, adjectives, verbs, and abstract nouns (Mackey 1965:182).
- (2) **Frequency:** Mackay defines frequency in practical terms. He suggests, first, choosing a reading selection students are likely to face, and listing each word that appears in that selection. Second, the teacher should count the number of times each word appears, and arrange the words in numerical order of appearance. This list illustrates the concept of "frequency" (Ibid:177). There is agreement between educators that vocabulary for foreign language text-books should be taken from the word lists which contain the sort and the amount of words used most often by the students.
- (3) **Learnability:** Some selections are based on learnability, that is,

words which make learning easy and understandable. Authorities recommend five factors should be taken into consideration here: similarity, clarity, brevity, regularity, and the learning load.

- (a) **Similarity:** Some words are easy to learn because of the similarity between the native language and the target language. Many loan words have become part of the Arabic language. Many feel that such words can be used in the text-books, specially for the beginning student. Words like "radio", "telephone", "garage", etc. could help and encourage the student to learn quickly, where these words can be used as key words in learning the Arabic language. صيني (1982:111) observes that the English phrase, "the book of the boy" is easier for the Arab who learns English than "the boy's book", because of the similarity between these constructions in the two languages. If the text-book of teaching Arabic as a foreign language is prepared for students who have an Islamic background, the text-book could emphasize Arabic words similar to words used in other such cultures.
- (b) **Clarity:** It is a fact that concrete words are easier to learn than abstract words since that which they describe can be pointed to and touched. This is what is meant by "clarity". So the text-book should present more concrete words than abstract ones. Allan (1983:7) recommends that the teacher use things and persons in the classroom in order to explain the meaning of words to the students. It should be mentioned here that it is difficult to have a text without abstract words. Without them, the text would be artificial. So the experienced author is one who includes an adequate number of abstract words, so that the

clarity and purity of the reading samples can be maintained.

- (c) **Brevity:** Certain words are sometimes included in reading selections because they are short and easy to learn. Long words are considered difficult to learn. Words with long syllables are more difficult than words with short syllables. For example, the Arabic words, "إضطرب" and "مستشفى" are more difficult than "ضرب" and "مشفى" (الخولي 1982:100). In the view of صيني, some times some long syllable words are easier than short syllable words, if the sounds of the long words are familiar to the learner. The word, "بستان" is easier than "حقل" which has the same meaning, because the second word contains sounds which are more difficult for the student learning Arabic. The word "مشوا" is more difficult than "ذهب" and the word "كتاب" is easier than "الدجى" because of the existence of sounds which are written but not pronounced.

The text-book writers should be aware of the fact that some words may have the same form, but different meanings. In this respect, صيني (1982) notices that the word, "assist", has the same form in French and English but different meanings.

- (d) **Regularity:** Items that exhibit regular patterns in the language are more easily learned than those with irregular patterns. As a result, most foreign language text-books start with regular nouns and verbs. It is no wonder, as Mackay (1965:188) claims, that some methods present only regular nouns and verbs in their beginning courses. As far as the Arabic textbook is concerned, items such as "the perfect plural" should come before "the broken plural" because of the regularity of the first group.

### **3.2.5 The Arabic Word Lists**

There are thousands of vocabulary items in the lexicon of a language. It is impossible for one learning a new language to master the entire vocabulary. He should concentrate on the most frequently used words, in order to develop quickly communication skills in the new language. Most linguists agree that the primary resource for selecting text-book vocabulary is the word lists which contain words used in the daily routines of communication. Most text-book writers consult word lists when preparing language text-books for both natives and non-natives. Arabic textbook writers have devised relevant word lists. Thus, many Arabic word lists, produced both by Arabic native speakers or non-native speakers of Arabic, are available. These word lists provide a guideline for current text-book authors.

Before examining the Arabic word lists that are available to us, it should be mentioned that some have suggested that textbook writers can select vocabulary basing their choice on personal feelings and experience. This is not advisable. Brill believes that such work could lead to negative results. The author may select words which do not fit the student's needs. Also, he might omit other words which the student does need (Brill, 1940:8). Landau (1959) also found that most Arabic text-books he analysed did not have an adequate vocabulary selection. He felt that words had been selected randomly (cited by طعيمة 1985 ). There is no doubt that vocabulary selection is of utmost importance for the Arabic language, owing to its many difficult words and expressions. Concerning the Arabic word lists, it is useful to consider the features of the following word lists.

### **(1) Brill word list**

This list was established in 1940. Brill calls it "the basic word list of the Arabic daily newspaper". The sources of its vocabulary were several issues of **الاهرام** and **فلسطين** newspapers from the period between 1937 and 1939. The aim of this list was the selection of the most effective words to be used in an Arabic text-book for native speakers (Brill, 1940:4). This list contains 136,089 words taken from all types of newspaper articles.

### **(2) Baily's list of modern Arabic words**

In this list, Baily counted words from selected newspapers in Egypt, including two issues of the morning newspaper and one issue of the evening newspaper. Baily's lists include 200,000 words. It could serve as the main resource for selecting vocabulary for text-books intended for use in Egypt.

### **(3) Lotfi's list**

This list was compiled by Kadri Lotfi as part of his Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Chicago in 1948. In this list, Lotfi counted words in the text-books used in the kindergartens and the first two stages of the Egyptian schools. He came up with a list of 30,053 words, arranged according to their frequency. He considered his work as a basis for the selection of vocabulary for text-books in Egyptian elementary schools.

**(4) A word count of modern Arabic prose undertaken by Jacob Landau of the American Council of Learned Societies, New York, 1959**

This list includes 136,000 words taken from sixty Egyptian books in different literary styles including novels, short stories, criticism, travel books, history, economics, and political articles. Landau hoped that the student, after learning these words, could read, not only the newspaper, but also the language of literature and intellectual culture.

**(5) Radwan List, 1952**

This list was established for Egyptian children entering school. The source for this work was conversations between two children for six months, 170 children in different school situations, and 30 children outside school. The total number of words in Radwan's list is 2249 words taken from 38,020 words heard in the conversations of 202 children between the ages of 4.5 and 5.5 . The main objective of this list is the discovery of frequently used words for use in reading text-books in the first stage of elementary schools.

**(6) Toamah's list**

This list was prepared by Toamah in (1982) recording the most frequently used words in the Arab world. It contains one thousand words which have been chosen by mutual agreement of fifty students coming to Egypt for university study from thirteen different Arab countries. This list

may profitably serve those who teach Arabic as a foreign language, since it covers both spoken and written language in thirteen different Arab countries.

**(7) A list of graded vocabularies for learners of Arabic by Sartain (1979)**

This list consists of six parts. Each contains five hundred words. The total number of words in this work is three thousand, arranged according to frequency of use. Sartain claims that the first 1500 words in this list are words most frequently used in Arabic prose; therefore these words could be used in the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

**(8)**

There is another type of word list made by comparing different lists to come up with new list of words used frequently in the Arabic language. Among these lists, the common word list in the Arabic language is by khatir (Cairo, 1955). This list contains the thousand most frequently used words in the Brill and Khater lists. Another such list was done by Daud Abdo (1979). Abdo's list contains the words most frequently appearing in the Landau, Brill and Abdo lists.



## **(9) The list of Khartoum International Institute of Arabic**

This list consists of 1500 words taken from fourteen text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. The main objective of this list is vocabulary selection for establishing a standard textbook for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

In judging the Arabic word lists, the following facts have been considered:-

- (1) Some of these word lists are prepared for native and non-native speakers, as mentioned in the descriptions of these lists. Educationally, however, there are major differences between teaching the Arabic language to Arab students and to foreigners.
- (2) Some of the Arabic word lists are established for children in elementary schools. A fear concerning these lists is the possible use of these words in text-books for teaching Arabic to adults.
- (3) Some Arabic word lists were compiled too long ago. Brill's, for example, was prepared in 1940. When using such lists, we must consider changes in the meanings and usages of these words.
- (4) It is a fact that these word lists could not perfectly cover the learner's needs in his specialization. For example, the words used in medical science are different from the words used in agriculture. Likewise, religious words are different from the words used in engineering.

But, in spite of all that, the word lists remain an important and effective resource for the person selecting vocabulary for Arabic language text-books.

In examining the Arabic text-books, it is necessary to know: Some

facts such as : (1) what kind of vocabulary has been chosen; (2) the lists from which that vocabulary has been selected; and (3) the extent to which these words achieve the students' needs.

### **3.2.6 Presentation of Vocabulary**

It has already been pointed out that text-book authors should recognize vocabulary as a central element in language instruction. If this is the case, then it follows that the question of how that vocabulary is presented in language text-books takes on importance.

Many who have written Arabic text-books have not selected the best vocabulary. Although they thought they were providing helpful lists, their choices were often illogical.

Muscia and Rosenweig (1979:241) point out that "a good amount of vocabulary with a minimum of structure often makes for better reading comprehension and efficient survival communication". Nasr (1978:94) offers a contrasting perspective. He states that a student can handle a language, even with a limited vocabulary, if he has mastered its significant sound units and the basic grammatical structures.

In any case, vocabulary items must be presented carefully. Some basic suggestions are as follows:- (1) Move from concrete words to abstract words; (2) Move from original to derivative; (3) Move from simple to complex.

Educationally, concrete words have priority in language text-books. The beginner learns those words more easily which describe objects that can be seen and touched. This is particularly true with children. Adult students possess the capacity required to master abstract words, since they

are familiar with the concepts in their native language. In this respect, Carter (1987:15) remarks that "adults can develop greater degrees of abstraction in their use of lexical items and have a stronger basis too". Even with adults, however, the text-book writer serves the students best by making their task as easy as possible. Offering concrete words before abstract words helps to accomplish this goal.

Another method beneficial to the students is the presentation of vocabulary items in context. Isolated words, outside their context, are often meaningless. Carter (1987) writes, "To know a word is to know it in context". Thus, wherever possible, vocabulary should be taught in a manner where the context (spoken or written) enables the student to better grasp word meanings. Nasr draws attention to the fact that the context can either be a situation, or a large linguistic context. For example, the word "دور" (meaning turn or role) can find its context in a short phrase such as "دوري", which means "My turn". It could also be used in a large linguistic context such as ("The role of the minister was effective in finding the appropriate solution", Nasr, 1978:97).

The use of borrowed words in the Arabic language could be a useful means for facilitating language learning. To make this possible, these words can be used as key words. Words like "radio bedroom", "villa", and "bus", which have become a part of the Arabic language, help the foreign student pick up the general meaning of phrases in reading selections. Many Arabic words are similar to words in Spanish, Persian, Urdu, Hebrew and other languages, as الناقه (1983) confirms.

In the preparation or evaluation of an Arabic language text-book, another factor to be considered is the length of the vocabulary lists. This question relates both to the text-book as a whole and each particular lesson.

No study can speak definitively on this issue. Each case is unique, depending on factors such as the age and background of the learner, the duration of the programme, and the objectives of both student and instructor. قفیشه and القاسمي (1980) recommend that each lesson contain between twenty and thirty words. Other experts differ. An American study suggests no more than eight words per lesson, particularly in work with pre-teenage children. This same study, however, concedes that, if certain criteria for selecting vocabulary were considered, adults could handle up to thirty words in each lesson (N. Finccchario 1965).

Whatever the average number of words per lesson, the wise text-book author places fewer words in the early lessons. Then, as the student gains knowledge and confidence, the size of the vocabulary list can gradually grow. The reverse is quite unacceptable.

Arabic is a derivational language. From single root words, many other words can be derived. The text-book writer can employ this Arabic language trait in his teaching method. For example, many derivatives can be extracted from the word "كتب", such as "كتاب - كاتب - مكتب - مكتبة - مكتوب", etc. Authors should include such words in their books. In support of this, Nasr (1978:98) remarks, "A very effective way of teaching Arabic vocabulary items to foreign students is to have the students master the derivational forms. They would, then, not only recognize the meaning of new words, but also know how to construct them. It is possible, though, that presenting too many derivative forms in text-books for beginners could lead to negative results. The author must use them with care and moderation.

### **3.2.7 Conclusion**

Although it had been neglected for a long time, the teaching of vocabulary has been given more attention in recent years. Through research, scholars have found that lexical problems, that is, students learning poorly selected words, frequently hinder their efforts at communication.

This chapter discusses several theoretical concepts relating to the teaching of vocabulary in Arabic text-books. Awareness of these concepts enables writers to prepare more effective text-books. This chapter concludes with a summary of these principles.

1. It is obvious that words do not have the same meanings in all languages. Even within a single language, the same word can carry different meanings for various societal groups. The geographical location, culture, and personal experiences influence an individual's interpretation and usage of words.
2. Since a word in isolation is meaningless, vocabulary words must appear in context.
3. Textbooks for beginning students should give each word only one meaning, since multiple meanings unduly increase the students' learning load and leads to frustration.
4. Concrete words should come before abstract words. Concrete words describing common, everyday objects are essential for routine conversations.
5. Structure and content words are both necessary. Those learning a new language require experience with both types.
6. In selecting specific vocabulary items, the textbook author should remember many factors, including frequency, range, availability,

coverage, and learnability. Each word must be purposely chosen, in order to help meet the overall goals of language learning.

7. Once the words have been chosen, the writer carefully considers different methods of presentation. The quantity of words per lesson, as well as the use of derivation, antonyms, and synonyms - each of these is an important factor in the preparation of the standard text-book.

### **3.3 ARABIC CONSTRUCTION AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP**

#### **TO TEACHING ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Grammar offers the linguistic instrument that conveys the meaning of an utterance. Some people use the term 'grammar' when referring to the rules that direct those just learning a language, as well as all those who speak or write that language. Others use the same word to describe a collection of generalizations which do not regulate, but merely reflect the existent behaviour of a language. In terms of this view, the role of grammar is only descriptive. Still others use 'grammar' in a third manner. For them, it symbolises the theory of the structure of language (Nasr, 1978).

The definition of 'grammar' and, more broadly, the academic questions of language are critical. Teaching grammar correctly is a significant factor in any language teaching programme. In order to communicate effectively, the language learner must not only be able to use new vocabulary, but conform to the language's accepted mode of word order within sentences.

In applying these ideas to the Arabic language, further complications arise. Arabic is a difficult language. It is not a simple task for the native

speaker to learn the rules of grammar, much less the foreign-born learner. So, in discussing grammatical concepts, it is wise to deal with the issue as a whole, to seek a broad understanding of the factors involved, in order to discover the best ways of applying the broad principles to the Arabic language, which, as mentioned above, is difficult to learn.

The history of the Arabic language offers helpful insight. In the past, Arab scholars have established the rules of grammar with the goal of maintaining the purity and proper usage of the Arabic language. They found this necessary when many people began speaking the language incorrectly, or even more seriously, misreading the Holy Quran. Arab grammarians wished to retain the Arabic language in its pristine form in order to maintain the language of the Quran. Otherwise, the Quran itself might be lost. As a result, they studied carefully what they regarded as proper linguistic data. They discovered and analysed the regular rules of the language, as well as the irregular exceptions to those rules, both of which condition the purity of the language. These scholars employed different means of study, such as attestation. Intentionally, they concentrated on a pure study of the grammar itself. Instructing others in the practical use of the grammar served only as a secondary goal. As a result, the rules of Arabic grammar seem to stand as an end in themselves, and not as helpfully to serve the learners and users of the language. The varied outcome of this



early study explains the large amount of literature available on the subject of Arabic grammar. In relation to this, برج (1980) believes that there is no other nation with as much written about its grammar as the Arab nation have about theirs.

### **3.3.1 Reasons for the Difficulty of Arabic Grammar**

Most scholars agree that Arabic grammar is quite complex. If this is the case, it is relevant to discuss some of the reasons for this view. The following is a list of the difficulties frequently mentioned by Arabic grammarians:-

1. The Arabic grammarians were influenced by Aristotelian philosophy and logic. Following this system, they paid more attention to the philosophy of the language than the practical aspects of the language itself. To complicate matters, they could not agree on their conclusions. These disagreements resulted in different schools of grammatical thought, such as the Kufa and Basra schools.
2. The grammarians adopted the analogy principle which they used to judge what aspects of the language were most important and which they could disregard. They recognized that analogy is inducing the unknown from the known. This is what led ابو علي الفارسي and

ابن جني to state that data which conform to the accepted norms of the Arabic language are a legitimate part of that language ( cited by محجوب , 1986).

3. The Arabic grammarians fashioned the idea of cause and effect claiming that phenomena in the language are governed by this explanatory framework. For that reason, Arabic grammar has been broken into many different branches. Examples of these include الاشتغال - التنازع and so on.

In reality, the adoption of the cause and effect reasoning has not helped students of the language, but rather contributed problems to the teaching of the Arabic language, both for native speakers and others seeking to learn the language.

4. Arabic linguists have not taken into account the critical fact that language is a social phenomenon. They have not give adequate attention to its cultural and social aspects. No language can be studied in a setting divorced from its actual usage, since the development of language skills involves habits acquired through varied forms of learning.
5. Arab grammarians generally consider "grammar" as the core of the language. Moreover, they view case-endings as the cornerstone of the language. They do this to the extent that some of them identify

"grammar" as "case endings". Actually, modern linguists find that this idea of case endings has made the grammar more complex.

Modern analytical studies have demonstrated that grammar consists of many different features, including lexical items, as well as relations among words, sentences and larger expressions. Based on these broader premises, it might be said that Ibn Khaldun recognized syntax as semantically indicating a wide number of grammatical items, such as subject, object, subject of a nominal clause and predicate of a nominal clause etc.

The previous points (numbered above) describe the most serious obstacles which give the Arabic language its impression of extreme difficulty.

When we look at the current teaching of Arabic grammar, we discover that many old difficulties remain. The heritage of traditional Arabic grammar still controls much of present-day thinking about the language. For this reason, it is helpful to add the following points:-

1. One major question that remains is this: which Arabic language should foreign learners be learning? Many Arab linguists and text-book writers insist that classical Arabic must provide the content for teaching Arabic in schools. They may even hold a more extreme position, stating that students should study all elements of

the classical language, including its linguistic anomalies. Their recommendations have led to a teaching style that offers an over-intensive, elaborate presentation of the language. This extreme creates many practical difficulties for even native speakers of the language. Secondary and high school students suffer needless pain (قوره , 1982).

2. Some educators believe that instructors who have greater concern with theoretical (as opposed to practical) features of the language contribute to the poor performance of students. This over concern with theory leads teacher and text-book writers to focus too much on the content of their teaching, to the neglect of teaching methods and the students themselves (محجوب , 1986). There is no doubt that in teaching a language meaningful contexts, gradation of individual items, as well as the quality and quantity of subject matter must be taken into consideration. All these factors do affect the educational process.
3. Some people note a large gap between the language taught in schools and the language spoken outside the academic context. They believe this divergence adds to the difficulty students have in learning the grammar. To illustrate this, it could be pointed out

that many text-books and teaching methods employ classical Arabic constructions, while the learners hear and speak modern Arabic (and its various dialects) in different contexts (Ibid.).

4. The very techniques used in presenting grammar could themselves add to the difficulty of the subject. عطا (1986) believes that presenting المجرورات and المنصوبات ، المرفوعات in the system, as they are, further complicates the process of teaching and learning grammar. This arrangement does not take into account the objectives, capabilities, and interests of the learners. It is commonly observed that Arabic grammar, from سيويه until the present time, follows the same arrangement and standard.
5. Arabic grammar depends on abstract concepts. An understanding of this gives learners, consciously or unconsciously, the impression that grammar is dull and difficult.
6. Another important point has made Arabic grammar difficult. This is the low standard required of Arabic teachers. Poorly prepared teachers are not capable of teaching grammar correctly and effectively. Many teachers do possess adequate knowledge of the language, but are not aware of the best teaching methods. They know the material, but cannot present it well. On the other hand, other teachers are quite knowledgeable when it comes to teaching

methods, but are less informed as to the grammar.

All of this leads us to the next point:- attempts to simplify, and to facilitate student learning of Arabic grammar.

### **3.3.2 Attempts to Simplify Arabic Grammar**

Arabic grammar constitutes the central core of the Arabic language in its totality. Many native and non-native students of Arabic experience difficulty in fully understanding Arabic grammar. Reasons for these problems may lie in the different approaches to stylistic and structural matters that the various grammatical schools have in approaching the teaching of Arabic. Another contributing factor is the widespread reluctance to modernise the grammar. Traditionalists insist that new teaching methodologies interfere with the purity and clarity of Arabic expression. As a result, much teaching has become confused and out of date owing to the lack of commonly accepted rules and methods. This difficulty in teaching and learning Arabic led certain thinkers many years ago to seek ways to simplify and modernise Arabic grammar.

The idea of simplifying grammatical rules is not a new one. The

appearance of Al-Mukhtasarat many years ago was an indication of the widely felt need for simplified teaching methods. These books are an effort to revise many of the obsolete and irregular grammatical rules of Arabic into a simple and coherent body which would be much more useful in teaching students than the old method which is based on clumsy presentation and articulation of grammatical rules.

Mukhtasarat largely focused on the most basic and necessary features of Arabic grammar. The scholars of the Al-Kufa and Basra schools were the guiding force behind the development and publication of Al-Mukhtasarat (ضيف, 1986:13). For those interested in teaching Arabic, the simplification was, and still is, an ideal of the highest importance that all concerned should strive to realise. Al-Jahiz endorses teaching children the basic grammar that enables them to express themselves correctly (معروف, 1987:178). In his book الجميل في النحو, الزجاني calls for creating standard texts for those seeking better learning skills, recommending the emphasis to be on style and content which help the student learn Arabic in a proper manner (الزجاني, 1985:19).

In a similar manner, الزبيدي argues in his book "الواضح" for the simplification of Arabic grammar. In it, Al-Zubaidiy recommends teaching the language with emphasis on syntax, phonetics and semantics while avoiding the many complexities and differences that are so common among

Arabic grammarians (Khalifa, 1986:46-8).

A grammar book which aims to meet these "guidelines" was written by ابن جني ; these days it would probably be called pedagogical. The book is restricted to the basic rules of Arabic grammar, excluding the linguistic complications which lead to faulty learning (Ibid.) One of the most famous Arabic scholars in this field ابن أجيروم المغربي . In his book, متن الأجيرومي , he tries to present the grammatical rules of Arabic in a simple and understandable way. This major work fascinated many Arab grammarians and was therefore used in many schools for a considerable length of time ( ضيف , 1986:16).

In the same vein, ابن هشام wrote three books. The first is called, الإعراب عن قواعد الإعراب , which means, literally, The Avoidance of Case Endings. The book is aimed at beginners of Arabic and does not deal with iCrab at all. The second volume (Qatr al-Nada) is intended for the intermediate level of language education. The third book (Shudhur al Dhahab) is intended for advanced students of Arabic. It contains many details regarding grammatical rules which would interest Arabic specialists studying the language for special purposes. The above books are examples of those used for teaching Arabic and its grammar.

The efforts of those who favour simplification are not limited to the past - they continue today. Arab grammarians, who generally have a



complex philosophy of grammar, adopted many of ابن مضاء hypotheses and interpretations of grammar when establishing grammatical rules. His revolutionary ideas called for the elimination of unnecessary rules such as cause and effect, ( حذف ) deletion, superlative insertion ( اضمار ) and dependency, ie. the theory of متعلقات . In relation to this, ابن مضاء says:-

"This is all unnecessary argumentation because speech is well-formed without it, and does not need it. It behoves us to reject it and reject with it the theory of the regent which supplies us with all these hypothetical proposals which are not part of the speaker's internalised knowledge of his language".

### **3.3.3 Contemporary attempts to simplify Arabic Grammar**

The efforts toward simplification of Arabic grammar in recent years are largely the product of new pioneering instructors. One of the leaders in this field was ابراهيم مصطفى (1937) who adopted Ibn Mada's theories on language improvement. In his book, احياء النحو, مصطفى argues for the simplification of Arabic syntax by avoiding cause and effect as well as implied pronouns. In 1938, an Egyptian committee recommended teachers to introduce the concept of grammar based on sentences, complements and styles to their students. They argued that sentences consisted of two

elements, the subject and predicate. The complement is whatever utterance adds to the basic meaning of the sentence. The style refers to those patterns of linguistic construction, primarily analogical formation (معروف , 1987:179).

One of the most important proposals for the simplification of Arabic was put forward by شوقي ضيف. He endorses a new classification of Arabic syntax for the students benefit. He calls for the omission of some chapters ( أبواب ) of the Arabic grammar and reclassification of these for the simplification of pedagogical grammar. He advocates dropping case endings except in cases where they contribute to the meaning of the utterance. (See ضيف , 1982 and 1986).

The examples mentioned above should give the reader an idea of some of the efforts which have been geared toward simplification and modernisation of Arabic teaching ideas. We must admit that not all of these attempts have been comprehensive or understandable. Until recently, there has been no standard reference which teachers or writers could consult when looking for proper, accepted grammatical rules.

### **3.3.4 Teaching Grammar Functionally**

Most Arabic teachers emphasise grammar as an end in itself rather than as the means necessary to achieve the end of effective communication. Such misplaced ideas led to the introduction by progressive instructors of teaching Arabic functionally. عبده, 1979:9 believes that the aim of functional grammar teaching is the mastery of the language through practical practice in common and ordinary circumstances. In this way, the student learns to speak and understand Arabic correctly. He or she must be aware that proper grammar is a means for using and mastering the language and not an end in itself. In relation to this point, عبده believes that if we asked instructors why it is necessary to teach the particle "لن", the expected response would be that the student must know that "لن" is a subjunctive particle and that the imperfect form of the verb which comes after it should be in the subjective (accusative) mode. The core of Abdu's beliefs revolves around the fact that a student must know how to react to a grammatical item practically regardless of any limiting theoretical rules.

Obviously many basic and central grammatical rules may not be dispensed with, yet there is a substantial minority of superfluous rules that can be avoided. For example, a student should know that in Arabic it is possible to say "قرأ التلميذ الدرس" and "التلميذ قرأ الدرس". In other words,

the beginner should realise that in Arabic, the subject may come before or after the verb. Similarly, one must understand that the particle "al" in a word like **الدرس**, is pronounced as d, and not "ال". All students should understand these and other fundamental rules. Conversely, it is not necessary for students to know that the vowel point "fatha" in certain words indicates declinability or indeclinability (bina or iʿrab). Also, it is not mandatory for a student to understand the nature of the implied pronoun. Abdu's writings endorse the view that in teaching, instructors should not thoroughly explain grammatical rules in their full details. Teachers should present only what is pertinent to facilitate the practical needs of the learners.

Most grammar teaching is usually done in one of two ways; either inductively or deductively. In the deductive approach, the instructor presents the grammatical rules to the students followed by examples and exercises. In an inductive style, the instructor first gives the students examples and then allows them time to consider them. From the most proper and instructive examples, the students should be able to see the similarities between the model data and arrive by their own reasoning at the correct grammatical rule. In real life situations, the inductive approach has distinct advantages over the deductive one in that the student is able to observe the agreement and differences between the given examples and

formulate rules with the help of his peers and teacher. The deductive method simply places its emphasis on the memorisation of given facts and rules and sees this mimicking as the whole aim of instruction. In my opinion, such a method detracts from the students' confidence and their own abilities and instead produces an ineffective and lazy motivation.

### **3.3.5 Grammatical Subjects in Arabic Grammar Text-Books**

A common complaint among grammarians is that a standard comprehensive text on Arabic grammar does not exist for either native or foreign students. They typically feel that text authors and publishers are still in favour of classical methods of instruction and grammar despite their complexity and irrelevance. Most text-books follow one of two presentation styles: the traditional or modern. The traditional method makes use of nominatives, subjectives and genitives while the modern approach emphasises the basic and practical grammar which helps students speak in ordinary situations.

Despite opposition, and perhaps because of it, some progressive instructors have focused on the needs of non-native Arab students in organising new text-books with the most relevant subjects geared to student needs and experiences.

In 1967, الحديدي suggested the following subjects be taught to students of non-Arabic origin speakers by their teachers.

1. The definite and indefinite articles.
2. The demonstrative pronoun.
3. The singular (masculine and feminine).
4. The separate pronoun (masculine and feminine).
5. Interrogation particles.
6. The nominal sentence.
7. The adjectives (masculine and feminine).
8. The case ending of the singular pronoun and the governed noun of the genitive construction.

These are the grammatical subjects which have to be introduced at the first level of Arabic instruction (الحديدي , 1967:168). In 1980 in Rabat, Morocco, a symposium was held that suggested the following subjects should take priority when teaching grammar to non-natives.

1. The predicate and the subject.
2. The relative clause.
3. The construct state and the governed noun of genitive construction.

طعيبة in 1985 (190) recommended that the subjects of basic Arabic language text-books should be as follows:-

1. The pronouns.
2. Interrogation particles.
3. Masculine and feminine.
4. The demonstrative pronouns.
5. Prepositions.
6. The definitive nouns and the common nouns.
7. The negative particles.
8. Verbs (present, past and imperative).
9. The sun letters and the moon letters.
10. The form of future tense (al-sin and saufa).

These examples for new subjects and curricula in grammar text-books indicate that some in the teaching community are aware of the need to teach Arabic in new and easier ways. Though these efforts are obviously not yet comprehensive nor accepted by all, the tentative beginnings may be enough to challenge others to respond in a similar manner.

### **3.3.6 Teaching Arabic Grammar**

Since most text-books writers and teachers are concerned about teaching the Arabic language, it is entirely appropriate to consider their

contributions to new teaching methodology. In dealing with this issue we will first pose the following question: What language should be taught? This is an important question, since there are many different forms or varieties of Arabic, including the following:-

1. Classical Arabic, **فصحى** , which is the language of the Quran and other ancient literature. Many traditionalists favour this language as the medium for teaching Arabic even today. Their desire is to maintain the pure language of the Quran and the rich Arabic heritage.
2. Modern Standard Arabic, M.S.A., which is the language of educated people, the media, information services and official documents. I feel this particular language is the one which should be used in teaching Arabic, especially for non-native learners.
3. Colloquial Arabic. Many favour the use of a colloquial Arabic dialect. This is the variety of Arabic most commonly used by educated and non-educated alike, as well as tourists visiting Arab countries. In reality, the adoption of this variety as the teaching medium would create many problems. First, there are a wide range of varieties from which to choose, for example, Egyptian, Iraqi, and Saudi varieties, just to mention a few. Another problem is that these varieties or dialects are primarily spoken and not written.



And then, the learning of any one Arabic dialect would limit the student to being able to communicate only in that country. When travelling elsewhere, he would discover the use of another dialect. In fact, there is more than one dialect in use in any Arab country, even though this militates against the unity of the Arab world.

As a matter of fact, there is general consensus among linguists and text-book writers that modern standard Arabic would be the best language for use in teaching Arabic both to those with some knowledge of, and those just beginning to learn, the language.

In addition to his agreement with the principle of using modern standard Arabic for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, عبدالعزيز, (1980) further suggests the creation of an even simpler language form for use with beginners, a basic Arabic. This language would offer both simple vocabulary and grammar, as an initial means of communication. And, specifically in relation to teaching grammar, it must be taken into account also that text-books should present learners with patterns of exercises before forcing specific grammatical rules upon them. Teachers would correct student errors without offering justification for those corrections.

There is no doubt that effective teaching methods do better enable student learning of grammar. Questions do remain, however, as to the advantages of teaching grammar as an integral part of each lesson as

opposed to seeing it as a separate subject. On the one hand, some linguists favour teaching grammar as a part of the broad language study, claiming that the two are integrally related.

On the other hand, other instructors and text-book writers favour teaching grammar as an independent subject. For instance, Fischer (1980) observed the great importance of Arabic grammar and constructions. He feels that, for them to receive the attention they deserve, it is best to teach them as a separate subject. To further support his opinion, he points out the differences between Arabic and other languages, such as English or French, which teach grammar indirectly. Arabic grammar has unique characteristics, he argues, that need intentional explanation and clarification, avowing that the language forms must be understood before they can be read. Two important factors must be borne in mind by teachers of Arabic. First, one must understand the importance of contrastive analysis between the native language and the target language. Second, in order for the learner to grasp the language, it must be simplified. Fischer and others are aware of the importance of these functions, particularly learnable style, meaningful context and logical gradation (Fischer, 1980). It seems to me that teaching grammar independently, as a subject separate from other strict language work, benefits the learners. When I questioned some

instructors currently involved in teaching Arabic as a foreign language, they pointed out a trend toward teaching grammar separately, and doing this in a manner which suits the student's level by offering only the most useful and needed grammatical instruction.

### **3.3.7 Conclusion**

The Arabic language has unique characteristics which distinguish it from all other languages. Features like derivation, case ending and the existence of singular, dual, and plural, give the probably accurate impression that Arabic is a difficult language to learn. Grammar is the main element of both spoken and written forms. The importance of grammar lies in history - Arabs developed the grammatical system to maintain the purity of the ancient language. The supreme centrality of the Quran, especially as it relates to new converts to Islam, made the learning and classification of this language structure essential.

Today, classical Arabic is losing its popularity. Its difficulty has contributed to this decline. Also related is the widespread use of dialects. Divergences among the dialects further complicate the matter. The question must continually be asked whether, in teaching, one of the dialects should take priority over the more standard forms of the language.

Essentially, Arabic grammar is considered the core of the language. In fact, grammar has been a primary concern of linguistic scholars since the first century of the Higraph until recent times. Unfortunately, Arabic grammar has not been modified to accord with contemporary usage. Likewise, teaching methods are often outdated. Blame for this must be laid on the traditionalists who resist all arguments of modern linguists, those attempting to improve and modernise the language. Indeed the difficulty of learning grammar may be summarised as follows:-

1. The fear that developing and improving grammar may destroy the holiness of the Quran (القرآن). Many feel that modernising the language would lead to changes within key concepts which underlie Islam. These changes would thus mislead readers of the Quran.
2. Concentration only on case endings and the resultant avoidance of other factors which also shape the Arabic language.
3. The intensive study of underlying principles of the language rather than the language itself.

Traditionalists believe that people learning the language need to know every detail of that language. There is a notion that a student of the language, has to learn the unnecessary grammar in order to be able to understand the necessary grammar. In spite of the difficulty of the Arabic language situation, there have been successful attempts to improve the

teaching of grammar. As part of a famous attempt, ابن مضاء wrote his book, الرد علي النحاه , criticising the views of traditional grammarians. Overall, efforts to facilitate learning of Arabic grammar can be summarised as follows:-

1. Grammar must be seen as more than a matter of case endings, but including also other features such as lexicon, phonology, semantics, and a consideration of cultural aspects of language use.
2. Teachers must recognize the differences between teaching Arabic as a mother tongue of Arabs and teaching Arabic as a second language to non-natives. Acquisition of language can be achieved through pattern behaviours.
3. Teachers should follow the trend toward teaching grammar functionally in the light of the actual use of the language and descriptive linguistic analysis.
4. Likewise, teachers should follow the trend of employing modern standard Arabic as the medium of teaching. This particular form of the language will be most appropriate for most learners.

### **3.4 ARABIC CULTURE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO TEACHING**

#### **ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

##### **- Preview**

Teaching culture is a most important objective in teaching a foreign language. Without a basic comprehension of the linguistic and cultural implications of a language, one cannot truly understand that language. Teachers always offer an awareness of the culture and social milieu in order "to increase international understanding by enabling the students to enter into the life, thought, and literature of people who speak another language" (Rivers, 1981:315).

Jespersen (1961) makes an even stronger claim. He states that the primary purpose in teaching a foreign language is to impart an understanding of the people who speak the language.

In fact, no one can learn a language without a realization of its implications and meanings. A language instructor cannot avoid conveying an impression of the people whose language he teaches. Stated simply language

cannot be separated from culture.

All types of communicative behaviour, such as words, non-verbal utterances, gestures, or intonations, carry specific meanings within a language and culture. Without proper knowledge of this cultural dimension these will not be fully comprehended by the language novice. He may pick up totally incorrect impressions. In terms of this view **طعيه** and **الناقه** (1983:40) are right to describe the language as the vessel of culture.

In the light of the strong relationship among the peoples of the world, man must take advantage of all means of promoting cultural understanding, especially the study of languages.

### **3.4.1 The Concept of Culture**

The linguistic definition of **ثقافه** (culture) has come from the verb " **ثقف** ", which indicates cleverness and the ability to learn quickly. **يثقف** means to educate and to teach . This means that the word ( **ثقافه** ) incorporates the science, art, or knowledge which can be acquired easily and proficiently. In Rivers' point of view, culture "refers to all aspects of shared life in a community" (Rivers, 1981:316). **طعيه** (1981:10) reveals that the word " **مثقف** " (educator) describes the person who has a higher degree in a specific area of study or one who has gained

knowledge or experience within a field.

Taylor takes culture to refer to everything which relates to knowledge, beliefs, art, characteristics, legislation, traditions, etc. Cited by طعيمة (1985:198). صيني holds that culture is simply the way of life of a certain people and all that influences this life ( صيني , 1982:201). Nostrand (1966) similarly defines culture as the sociological context which includes features such as customs; social, political, and economic systems; art, etc.

Students must see culture as more than a theoretical subject described in books. It is, rather, the life and identity of a group of people living in a specific location. When thinking of culture, one must consider even material things such as machines, equipment, factories, technology, as well as spiritual concepts: thought patterns, values, traditions, attitudes, etc.

These various definitions of culture all reveal the importance of these behavioural and societal constructs.

Cultures tend to remain somewhat stable over time. Traditions, customs, laws, legislation, pass from generation to generation. Each new group does, however, adjust old patterns and add new ones according to its circumstances and needs ( عبد العزيز , 1978).

Across long periods of time, cultures can change greatly. This



occurs quite naturally as people modify their behaviour to match new levels of achievement. **وظیف** (1985) notices that culture may be classified into categories:

- A. General. This includes the beliefs, ways of speaking, thinking, and working, manners of greeting, methods of building houses, patterns of social relationship, etc. These general constructs are shared by all individuals within a society or language group.
- B. Profession-specific. This refers to subgroups within a society who share in specific functions such as an occupation, i.e., carpenters, barbers, or manual labourers. This group within society possesses its own traditions, habits and patterns of behaviour.
- C. Private. This term refers to traditions or habits which exist within a specific group of individuals and are shared by those persons alone. Such a group has its own distinctive beliefs and thought patterns. People within a cultural subgroup such as this may, for example, adopt specific behaviours in relation to eating. They may build their houses in a unique fashion or use unusual means of transportation.

The group adopting this alternative lifestyle often remains separated from others in the society. This protects its uniqueness and enables continuity across several generations.

Recognizing and understanding cultural patterns helps one to see similarities, differences and creates inter- relationships among different peoples. Understanding of other cultures also enriches a person's knowledge of his own.

### **3.4.2 Language and Culture**

The human being is naturally a social creature. He lives in society. To accomplish this, he must communicate with others around him. Across history, man has created different means of expression in order to meet his needs. Of course, the primary means is language, the main medium for communication.

When a person attempts to communicate with people from other societies, he discovers that these people speak different languages. They may wear different clothes, or, in other ways, behave quite differently. All these cultural factors can be expressed through a language with its own phonological, morphological, syntactical and cultural systems which indicate specific meanings to those speaking the language. In this respect, Rivers (1981:318) states that "the native language is learned along with the ways and attitudes of the social group, and these ways and attitudes find

expression through the language. In this way the language is an integral part of the functioning social system". Similarly حسان (1984:82) observes that the development of a particular language is tied to the attitudes of the speakers of that language, particularly their view toward their environment. The following examples clarify the importance of this idea.

- A. Different cultures give varying meaning to basic features of life. For example, in some countries where rain aids the economic situation (i.e., absence of rain leads to drought and crop failure), rain is seen as a cause for rejoicing. Following this, expressions like سقى الله كذا or جادك الغيث cannot be understood outside their cultural context.
- B. Words frequently used in one area may not be as frequent elsewhere. Examples include:- camel, in the Arab world, Llama, in South America, or the different names for snow among Eskimoes.
- C. Similarly, cultural notions referring to historical, geographical, or traditional features of a country will often be unique to that area. A presentation to students of concepts such as شعرة معاوية or كثير رماذ القدر would be useless unless the student caught the background of these ideas.

Indeed, no serious scholar can question the close connection between language and culture. No one can expect to teach language without

dealing with factors of the social context, factors directly related to language and language learning. Such cultural factors inform or guide behaviour within a given society. They form the patterns of life according to recognized (though unwritten) rules which everyone living in an area would be expected to obey. The long term residents will not easily accept those who do not conform to these guidelines. Language, as the basic means of communication, informs a novice of expectations, and, ultimately, perpetuates them.

### **3.4.3 The Importance of Culture in Teaching**

Cultural implications must be included in the teaching of language, since culture represents the way of life of a people and is a significant reflection of the values, beliefs and behaviour of a human group. For these reasons, Finocchiaro (1969) believes that culture must be the final aim in any language teaching programme. In fact, in mastering language skills, one has to associate the language with its cultural implications and indications. The understanding of the similarities and differences of peoples leads to the cooperation and closeness between peoples around the world.

The learners of a new language usually are interested in the people who speak that language, how they live, behave, eat and interact with

others. Each society has its own beliefs and concepts. Therefore, the interactions between people in many different societies could create new thoughts and concepts which may work for the benefit of all mankind.

One of the primary factors which indicate the importance of teaching culture is the context and cultural meaning of phenomena. For example, the use of some phrases such as "peace be with you" will be misunderstood in the absence of cultural context. One wonders what would be the reaction of someone unfamiliar with the Arabic culture if one said "Peace be with you" as a Muslim salutation.

Another example:- If one asked an Arab student who lives in Britain "Do you want a cup of tea?", he might say, "Thank you". This reply would not communicate to a British host whether he wanted tea or not. But in Arabic culture "thank you" means "no". Such examples make it obvious that teaching cultural implications cannot be ignored and possibly should take priority in text-books for teaching foreign languages.

Concerning goals for the teaching of culture, Seelye (1974) proposes several goals of cultural instruction toward which classroom activities and materials should be directed. He believes that the student should have certain understanding, abilities and attitudes in order to realize that people act the way they do because the rules of society require them to do so to satisfy basic physical and psychological needs.

The student should realize that social variables such as age, sex, social class and place of residence affect the way people speak and behave. Students need to understand how people act conventionally, in most mundane situations or in crisis situations, in their target culture.

Teachers of a second language also must remember that culturally conditioned images are associated with the most common target words or phrases. The students need to develop intellectual curiosity about the target language and its culture in order to understand that new culture effectively.

It is obvious that consideration of these significant goals for language teaching strategy reflects the importance of culture and its application in language teaching programmes.

#### **3.4.4 Arabic Culture**

It is clear that each society possesses its own culture. Each culture has its own distinctive features: economic, religious, social, political and linguistic systems. In addition, it has its own traditional beliefs and customs which distinguish it from other countries.

Arabic culture is the historical heritage which expresses the life of the Arab nation with its individual characteristics.

The UNESCO organisation 29 May - 4 June 1969 defined the Arabic

culture as the comprehensive facts and activities which belong to the contemporary peoples of the Arab world, including scientific, technical and intellectual activities and the means to express these activities.

With this realisation of the nature of the Arabic culture, it is important to understand that this culture has been influenced by teachings of Islam through the Holy Quran and Sunnah (traditions of the Prophet and his close associates).

Many habits and values have been decreed by the Quran and Sunnah. Therefore these concepts have become a part of Arabic culture.

On the other hand, many concepts and traditions have been abolished because they are no longer suitable for the present day Arab society. As a result, a new form of culture has been founded, representing Arabic-Islamic concepts and values, or what we might call the Arabic-Islamic culture.

It is important to note that some educators look at the Arabic-Islamic culture as consisting of two autonomous parts, claiming that each part has its own characteristics.

Regarding this idea, طعيمة (1985:199) believes that Islamic culture refers to those principles, concepts and beliefs that have been revealed by the Holy Quran and Sunnah. He claims that, in the case of teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the text-book should create a balance when presenting

the two cultures. حسان (1984) favours this idea. These scholars admit of the autonomy of these two cultures without, however, denying their relatedness. Therefore, it seems safe to say that the Arabic-Islamic cultures cannot be entirely separated because the teachings of Islam are part of the cultural norms of the Arabs who carry these teachings and concepts with them wherever they go.

It is true that nations which have become Muslim have their own cultures, but there is no doubt that many concepts have been adjusted to align with Islamic norms and traditions. Furthermore, because the language of the Quran and the Islamic teachings is Arabic, which is impregnated with the cultural norms and patterns of the Arabs, these cultures must be affected by Arabic culture, albeit in an indirect manner.

Concerning text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, it is best to signal Islamic concepts as an integral part of Arabic culture. If the foreign learners are studying the language for religious purposes, the Islamic items would be clear and visible. But, if the learners are interested in studying the language for political or economic purposes, the Islamic contents would become critical.



### **3.4.5 The Contents of Arabic Culture**

It is difficult, even impossible, to delineate comprehensively what Arabic culture means in the context of a teaching programme or text-book. But it is possible to present the basic and important phenomena of Arabic culture, considering that the learner of any language usually tries to understand and adopt the correct behaviour of the new language in its setting.

The familiarity with the foreign language enables the student to achieve this goal and to deal with different groups within the host society.

Writers of Arabic text-books would do well to remember that those learning the Arabic language have their own images of Arabic culture. Therefore, the content should be reliable culturally as well as linguistically. This ensures that the syllabus is presented objectively with no prejudice or bias.

Concerning this, الناقه and طعيمة (1983:48) suggest that the content might contain unbiased writings from non-Arabic scholars concerning Arabic culture. The students themselves may be consulted about the subjects in which they have an interest.

The presentation of culture should concentrate on the important events within Arabic-Islamic culture, including the general and the specific

aspects of this culture which affect the behaviour of society and students simultaneously.

The presentation of such subjects as *قصة جحا* or *غارات الجاهلية*, on reference to the ancient professions which do not exist today, may not be immediately useful since this information does not directly aid the learner in understanding modern Arabic culture. In order to guard against attempts which indiscriminately bring together within the scope of one book a vast array of cultural points in TAFL, the following general outline, developed by Arab experts at a meeting in Khartum in 1981, might prove very useful. These particular Arab experts agreed that:-

- A. The cultural content should present to the students the important role which Arabic-Islamic culture has played in the development of the human intellect, by displaying those features which had exercised such an influence on international culture.
- B. The content should present the scientific and civilisational developments which affect Arab culture itself.
- C. Experiences and the impressions of people who visit the Arab world should be taken into account when preparing the cultural content.
- D. The content should offer a balance between the past and present of Arabic-Islamic culture, demonstrating the fact that this human heritage should be preserved and developed by the people of this

culture.

- E. The topics of the text-book should be multifarious in order to help the text-book designer to exploit the different methods in the book, such as the story, dialogue, personal characteristics, scientific topics, and locations. The content should pay attention to these subjects which go along with the application of the lexical and grammatical items in a text-book.
- F. The content should present the subjects which suit the age and learning levels of the learners. It must consider their time and give them effective and useful information.
- G. The content should deal with the contemporary life and daily life of the Arab and the interaction between the Arabic culture and the rest of the world.

In addition to the above factors, it is important to consider language in use in the different parts of the Arab world. Different concepts, social contexts, cultural meanings of words and phrases should receive attention in text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

It is also important to ensure that different patterns of behaviour are described in this text-book, considering that language and culture are two faces of the same currency.

With regard to the presentation of the culture of the students

(learners), some text-books designers believe that there is no need to compare the native culture with the target culture because the difference between the two cultures may weaken the motivation for learning the foreign language, as they tend to develop a "them versus us" orientation if the comparison is not handled carefully ( يونس 1978 ).

On the other hand, many educators are in favour of comparing the native and target cultures ( ابراهيم 1987; 1985 , وظيف ).

These scholars feel that the programme should present ideas about the learners' own culture, the way they live, work, express opinions. In this way, the learners can react to the Arabic culture positively and may try to discover areas of agreements and differences in both cultures. We should be aware that the principle of good and bad, correct and incorrect, have no place in such comparisons.

To ensure that cultural concepts are taught through the correct use of language, we might take advantage of the implications and applications of socio-linguistic research language which is important for a proper understanding of the important role of conveying and expressing culture through language, as well as the influence language has on thought patterns of speakers and their beliefs. In addition socio-linguistics studies the linguistic context, the context of situation, and the different types of language use.

Since this is the case, the text-book designers ought to utilise such information when dealing with the cultural dimension in their text-books for teaching the Arabic language to speakers of other languages.

#### **3.4.6 The Presentation of Culture in Textbooks for**

##### **Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language**

The previous discussion of the nature of culture and its contents leads us to the question of what cultural items should be presented and how they can best be taught to the students.

The acquisition of culture comes through the acquisition of vocabulary, idioms, verb forms, particles, etc. By learning such expressions students begin to observe many things for themselves which help them to understand and absorb the new culture.

Regarding acquisition of culture, Rivers states (1981:326) that "Teaching for cultural understanding is fully integrated with the process of assimilation of syntax and vocabulary, since language is so closely interwoven with every aspect of culture".

The concept of culture should be taught intentionally, especially in the first stages. Introducing culture directly takes the student away from the fundamental task of language learning and communication. **ابراهيم** (1987:338) reminds us that language items themselves reflect cultural concepts. For example, dual nouns, the verbs and the feminine personal pronouns in the Arabic language are cultural indications and are, in themselves, considered grammatical facts. Cultural content in text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language should be graded correctly to lead to effective teaching-learning.

**يونس and بدوي** (1983) suggest that text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language should contain three gradual and connected stages.

The first stage deals with the daily life of Arab society, presenting the different kinds of activities and behaviours seen there every day. These activities ought to be introduced through natural situations concentrating mainly on the speaking/listening skills as an approach to teaching the foreign language.

The second stage deals with the different aspects of culture, particularly Arab and Muslim life, in more detail including the contemporary elements of Arabic culture, through a framework of linguistic activities. These should deal with adequate utterance and expression, with an

awareness of the importance of the reading and writing skills. Reading and writing are very important because of the aesthetic values attributed to them in Arab society. Witness the special way in which the Quran is recited or poetry is read as well as the place of calligraphy in Arabic and Islamic Arts.

The third stage deals with the cultural aspect in full detail, the Arabic-Islamic heritage, it also includes the intellectual, economic, political and social factors which influenced Arabic civilisation. In this stage, the students begin to realise the abstract facts which help them to master the Arabic language and its cultural implications.

In attempting the facilitation of teaching of the cultural content, **ابراهيم** (1987:336) recommends that in the first stages it is essential to present the learner with the cultural patterns which differ from his culture and which distinguish Arabic-Islamic culture. The reason for his belief is that this helps avoid the linguistic and cultural interference from the very beginning of the process of learning the foreign language.

To reinforce the direction of facilitating the presentation of culture, **عبد العزيز** (1978) remarks that in order to come up with an effective method of teaching, cultural phenomena should not be taught all at one time. They could be presented in more than one lesson. This spacing technique might develop curiosity in the student in relation to the next

lesson. In addition, this approach enables the student to understand the vocabulary and constructions thoroughly rather than trying to encounter too much information without a proper appreciation of its full dimensions. Failure to adhere to this approach leads to negative teaching.

For example, when presenting a discussion of Islamic architecture, a teacher might start by defining habitation, then the Arabic house, its shape and room design. Later one could build on that information by giving information on old buildings in the country, the famous places in Arab and Muslim countries, such as mosques, fortresses, libraries and universities. One could concentrate on the different designs and decorations on these buildings which, in Islamic Art, inevitably draws on the aesthetic exploitation of writing. In this way, the student will realise the significance of Islamic culture and its contribution to international civilisation.

The question might be raised: In what form should cultural patterns be demonstrated?

One of the most common devices employed in language teaching/learning is dialogue. Carefully constructed dialogue helps students experience language in a context similar to actual life. They then are more likely to react naturally when interacting with people in a real-life Arabic setting.



القاسمي (1980) also believes that the employment of a social setting in the classroom offers the best means of language learning. Likewise, قفیشه (1980) claims that conversation within a small group of students, simulating daily life situations, stimulates the student to react naturally and confidently. By applying this method, cultural factors easily become part of language learning. But before employing this method of teaching the following criteria must be considered:-

- A. The objectives of teaching Arabic as a foreign language must take precedence over the restricted aim of importing a knowledge of the culture. Similarly, the teacher must consider the age, sex, and social relationships of the students.
- B. Dialogues should concentrate on the frequently encountered vocabulary, constructions, and cultural situations in the foreign language and its milieu.
- C. Dialogue should be natural. Artificiality makes conversations dull and ineffective.
- D. The dialogues should be on the level of present student knowledge. The vocabulary should be easily understood. The sentences should be neither too long or difficult.
- E. Those designing dialogues should focus their planning precisely around the most important (relevant) language elements and skills.

- F. Similarly, instructors should take into account necessary expressions such as *حسنا* [well], *لا بأس* [not bad], *آسف* [sorry] *أعتقد ذلك* [I think so], etc.
- G. The best dialogues include redundancy of meaning. These make the conversation more understandable.
- H. Dialogue language must be appropriate to the student's age, whether child, teenager, or adult.
- I. Dialogue should be appropriate for use outside the classroom, in order to encourage the student to apply his learning.
- J. Instructors should construct dialogue in a manner which encourages the student to memorize it. This learning will enable the student to communicate confidently, even in an otherwise unfamiliar language.

Dialogues presenting the Arabic language and culture in accordance with these criteria stand a good chance of leading to effective learning.

### **3.4.7 Conclusion and Criteria**

Broadly speaking, language is a vessel which conveys culture. Learning a language properly without an understanding of relevant cultural

implications is impossible.

Within all societies, language and culture are intimately inter-twined with each other, so much so that it is difficult to conceive of the one without the other.

Many educators view culture as the fifth 'language skill'. As a result of this thinking, many universities in different countries, particularly in the United States, require students for whom English is not the first language to take courses in American culture, regardless of the student's field of specialisation.

Based on this premise of the importance of culture in language teaching, text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language should present broadly Arabic-Islamic culture including those features which distinguish the social milieu of the Arabs from other people.

How is this done? Text-book writers will consult the best, most reliable sources, those which describe Arabic culture sympathetically and coherently. Also, the writer will take into consideration his objectives in teaching, as well as the ages and interests of potential students.

Better text-books present Arabic heritage and Islamic concepts and beliefs gradually and systematically, so students will grasp influences of the past on present culture. But writers cannot neglect the impact of contemporary currents on Arabic culture. Modern technology and other

recent changes in life certainly affect the use of language. The writer will then focus on the most common features of Arabic culture, avoiding useless references to rare phenomena which the student will not benefit from in any significant fashion.

It may be helpful to draw comparisons and contrasts between Arabic-Islamic culture and the culture of the students. Both the differences and agreements help the student see the implications of Arabic concepts and values.

Cultural items should be taught intentionally, although indirectly, through expertly written dialogues. Within each lesson, these items should be limited in number and clearly defined for the teacher, so as to enable him to present Islamic culture without personal bias.

In the light of all that has been discussed in this section, the remaining text summarises important criteria for textbook design. This would aid those involved in design and evaluation of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

These criteria are as follows:-

- A. Is the book prepared for one nationality of learners? If so, does the introduction clearly state this?
- B. Does the text-book consider the cultural characteristics of the intended learners?

- C. Are the Arabic-Islamic concepts presented in a balanced way?
- D. Is Arabic culture presented directly or indirectly?
- E. Are the Arabic-Islamic implications related only to one particular Arabic country, perhaps the country in which the book is published or to more than one country?
- F. Does the book overemphasize the bias or prejudice of the author, either towards Arabic culture or against the students' culture?
- G. Does the book reveal unnecessary influences from irrelevant foreign cultures?
- H. Does the author in presenting cultural factors, take into consideration the learners' language skills?
- I. Does the text-book describe important sites in the Arab world?
- J. Are Arabic-Islamic concepts presented in a variety of methods, including dialogue, story, poetry, or other means?
- K. Does the book include pictures which visually portray Arabic culture?
- L. Are old and modern cultural features presented equally?
- M. Do the vocabulary and constructions express thoroughly Arabic social behaviour?
- N. Does the book make clear that the primary objective of presenting Arabic culture is the acquisition and comprehension of the Arabic

language?

- Q. Are there any indications that the text-book would prepare the students for wide travel across the Arab world?
- P. Are cultural factors presented systematically and gradually?
- Q. To what extent has the book used modern standard Arabic (M.S.A.) when presenting culture?
- R. Is the content true and reliable?
- S. Does the text-book show the great contributions Arabs-Muslims have made to human civilisation?
- T. Does the book present outdated or trivial features of the Arabic culture?
- U. Does the book show the relationship between Arabic-Islamic heritage and life in the larger world?
- V. Does the book teach particular principles or directions (either political or religious)?
- W. Does the text-book use the student's language for teaching the Arabic culture or use the target language (Arabic)?
- X. Has the writer considered the age, educational level, and social class of the learners?
- Y. Do the given generalizations deal with the social environment effectively?

- Z. Does the book show the contemporary renaissance of the Arab world?
- a. Does the style of the book assist the student in his goal of clearly understanding Arabic-Islamic concepts?
- b. Does the text-book appropriately compare Arabic-Islamic culture with the students' culture?
- c. Does the text-book correct the many mistaken but commonly held ideas relating to Arabic-Islamic culture?
- d. What impression of Arabic culture does the text leave with the students?

These questions offer a potential standard for evaluating the cultural dimension of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. We will utilise them later in this thesis in relation to the task of evaluating the textbook which constitutes the main focus of our research.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PRACTICAL PART OF THE STUDY

#### 4.1 ANALYTICAL STUDY OF SOUNDS IN THE TEXT-BOOK:

##### ARABIC FOR BEGINNERS

##### 4.1.1 INTRODUCTION

With the increase in the number of people who are interested in learning Arabic, and with the need for certain books to meet and fulfil the requirements of these people, there have been many attempts to prepare standard text-books. In fact, many institutions have made their own contribution to this field. One of these is the Arabic Language Institute in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, which has published several text-books on teaching Arabic as a foreign language. The text-book for beginners which has been analysed is one of these. When a text-book has been chosen for teaching a language, certain linguistic and pedagogical values should be taken into consideration. Therefore, the text-book for beginners has been analysed in



order to discover the positive and the negative points in its contents. Such a procedure will give a clear idea of how the items and the teaching points have been employed. In this section, the Arabic sounds in the book have been examined in two stages - the oral and the written - in order to show how these sounds are arranged.

#### **4.1.2 THE ORAL STAGES**

Learning a language usually begins with listening and speaking skills, since mastering language depends on the correct pronunciation of sounds. For this reason, there has been a recent tendency to teach sounds as an independent stage. Some text-book writers recommend that such a stage be presented in a separate book, rather than in the basic text-book. In this stage, the student will deal with sounds orally, without any written symbols (letters), whether in the target language or in any other language. This is made possible by the use of pictures, conversation and repetition under the supervision of the teacher.

The oral stage of Arabic for Beginners is presented as a part of the basic text-book (the written stage) and not separately. The authors of this book believe that language skills are inter-related, therefore, language

elements such as sounds, vocabulary, construction and culture should be taught all together. Furthermore, many teaching items have been introduced in the oral stage of the book including sounds, verbs, numbers, grammatical words and expressions, in addition to what may be termed as the "pre-writing stage", where students are familiarized with writing from right to left. During this primary preparation, the students are asked to "draw" lines and curves which are similar to the shape of the Arabic letters. Moreover, the students become familiar with numbers, which helps them to distinguish sentences and phrases in dialogues and conversations. The task of the book in the oral stage is to concentrate more on the recognition and the discrimination of sounds through mimic imitation, repetition and sound abstraction, depending on pictures only. In the oral stage of this book, the dialogues upon which the text depends have been presented through meaningful words and clear sequences. In the analysis of the oral stage we depend on the teacher's book since there is no written symbol in the student's book in this stage.

One of the most important factors in sound teaching is the consideration of the circulation and the distribution of sounds in the book, since the difficulty of learning sounds may result from the insufficient circulation of sounds, or from the position of the sound in the word.

Therefore, the circulation and distribution of sounds in the oral and the written parts have been examined in detail. The findings on the oral stage are as follows:-

#### **4.1.2.1 Sound Circulation**

The introduction of sounds in the original texts has not been treated equally. Some sounds have been introduced intensively, whereas other sounds have been rarely introduced. The sounds l-m and n for example, have occurred fairly extensively. The sound l has been introduced 24 times throughout the original text of the five units which have been analyzed. The sound n came 18 times, and the sound m was presented 16 times. On the other hand, there have been found some sounds which have appeared only two, three, or four times, such as the sounds h, kh and d. Moreover, the sound th did not appear in any of the texts of the oral stage, though it had been introduced in drills and exercises.

It is worth mentioning that the most difficult sounds have been given less circulation and sometimes they have been represented on a level with the easier ones. Attention must be paid to the difficult Arabic sounds which cause problems to the majority of the students who deal with the

Arabic language for the first time.

However, it is important to mention that the sound which has had less presentation in the original texts, has been treated fairly in the exercises. Nevertheless it must be taken into account that sounds which are introduced in the original texts should be the only sounds which have to be employed in drills and exercises. In the oral stage of Arabic for Beginners it is also evident that some sounds which are considered difficult have been introduced early and intensively. For example, in the first lesson of the book, the sounds q, c, t and z have been presented. In the second unit also, the book has introduced the sounds kh, h, dh and h. The cumulative presentation of difficult sounds will increase the difficulties the student faces when just beginning to learn the Arabic language. My personal impression is that the first and the second lessons of the book should concentrate on the easier sounds, searching as much as possible for the similarities between the Arabic sounds and those of the student's native language.

#### **4.1.2.2 Sound Distribution**

If the circulation of sound is important where the student listens

to and pronounces the Arabic sounds several times, the distribution of sounds is also a matter worthy of consideration. The presentation of sound at the beginning, the middle and the end of the word plays a great part in eliminating mispronunciation. The student may, for example, pronounce the sound correctly when it comes at the beginning or the middle of the word, but he might find the same sound difficult when it comes at the end of the word. Consequently, problems with the pronunciation can arise not because of the sound itself, but because of its position in the word. The distribution of sounds in the oral stage, therefore, has been examined to show the extent to which the sounds have been distributed.

The findings of the analyses indicate that the Arabic sounds have not been restrictively presented. Some examples suffice. The sound b has not once been presented in the middle of the word. The sound j has been presented in the middle of the word three times, but it does not appear in the beginning nor at the end of the word. The sound kh is never found at the end of the word in the whole oral stage, though such a sound is considered to be one of the most difficult, causing pronunciation problems to the majority of students. The sound t has not been introduced in the final position of the word. The sound gh comes at the beginning of the word only, and the sound c has not been presented at the end of the word. These examples show the

distribution of sounds in the oral stage of Arabic for Beginners.

#### **4.1.2.3 Presentation of Sounds in the Oral Stage**

The organization of the items in the text-book for teaching a foreign language needs to be considered. Whatever the philosophy of the author may be, the size and quality of the book, along with the selection of material, should be well planned and organized.

Since we have been examining the sounds in this book, it would be appropriate to give an idea of the contents of the five units which have been analyzed.

In the first unit, the book introduces the sounds of q, t, c, s and n as well as the distinction between q and k. In the second unit, the book presents the sounds j, h, kh and h in addition to the distinction between the long vowels and the short ones in the case of genitives. In the third unit, the book introduces the sounds gh, j and b, the distinction between the sounds s and s and the differences between the long vowels and the short ones in the case of nominatives. In the fourth unit, the book presents the sounds sh, f, r, the distinction between dh and th and the pronunciation of s in the case of the short vowels. In the fifth unit, the book introduces the

sounds z, t, w, the distinction between t and t in addition to the pronunciation of the nunnation. As for the sixth unit, the introduction of the book indicates that it is a general revision of what has been presented in the previous five units. On examination, this unit is found to contain many extra items which have not been introduced earlier, and hardly to cover previous items at all. The following items have been introduced in this unit:-

1. The sun and the moon letters.
2. The pronunciation of the sound y as quiescent letter.
3. The distinction between gh and ʾ (hamza).
4. The distinction between d and d.

This contradicts the principle that the revision unit should be restricted to what has been presented before and leaves less opportunity for previous items to be practised clearly.

#### **4.1.2.4 Drills and Exercises**

There is no doubt that drills and exercises play a great role in language teaching. In this respect, the introduction of Arabic for Beginners claims that pronunciation problems may not be due to the difficulty of the

language itself, but because of the insufficiency of drills and exercises. Therefore, the book tries to pay more attention to the exercises which give the student a chance to practise the Arabic sounds. Drills such as listen, pronounce, substitute, have been adopted in the oral stage of the book. The discrimination between sounds, long and short vowel, gemination and nunation have also been given attention in the drills section. However, it is evident that some sounds introduced in drills have not been previously introduced in the original text. This means simply that the student will practise new sounds to which he has not listened.

In addition, each of the sounds presented has been practised as much as the others, despite the assumption that the difficult sounds should be given more practice in relation to the employment of sounds in the words. It is appreciated that the book has presented concrete words where the student can listen to the pronounced sound and look at the picture which relates to this sound. The book also highlights the discrimination between similar sounds by means of minimal pairs taking into consideration the presentation of sound in the initial, the middle and the final positions in the words.

It must be noted though, that when presenting certain sounds, the word in which the sound will appear should be chosen with care. For



example, in the oral stage of this book and for the presentation of the sound n in the case of nominative, genitive and accusative the book gave the words **نظاره - نقطه** and **نیل** just to practise the sound n. If this is the case, one ought to use other words which have the same sound but without the sounds q and z which are more difficult, just to avoid other complications when practising the pronunciation of the sound n.

#### **4.1.3 THE WRITTEN STAGE**

In the oral stage, the student depends on picture only, but in the written stage he or she will start dealing with the written forms of the Arabic language. The student sees the sounds written (letters) for the first time, matching the pronounced sound with the written symbols and depending on the pictures as well.

Thus we have examined the second part of Arabic for Beginners and we have the first, the oral stage. The outcome of this examination is as follows:-

#### **4.1.3.1 Sound Circulation**

The analyses of sounds in the second part of the book show that sounds in this part have also not been distributed properly. For example, the sound q has been introduced only once in the original text though it is hardly presented in the oral stage. The sounds z and s have been introduced in the fifth unit only, despite the fact that such sounds cause pronunciation problems to the majority of students. The sound j, also presented three times in one unit, does not show up again in the whole original texts of the five units. Such analysis indicates that the circulation of sounds has not been considered during the preparation.

#### **4.1.3.2 Sound Distribution**

As was mentioned before, in the written stage, the learners deal with the Arabic symbols for the first time. Therefore, it is essential to show these sounds in their different positions within the word. The absence of sound in these various positions will lead not only to mispronunciation, but to confusion in reading and writing as well, since students will not deal with these skills in which sounds take different shapes. In conjunction

with this, Arabic sounds have been examined to find out to what extent the book distributes sounds in this written part. The analyses indicate that the distribution of sound seems unorganized. A few examples can be given to show this. The sound h has been presented in the middle and the beginning of the word, but not at the end, though this sound itself has been introduced at the end of the word in the oral stage and in the word ضباح in particular. It is unwise for the student to listen to such sounds orally, when he cannot also see them in written form. The sound r comes in the middle of the word only. The sound gh has been presented only at the beginning of the word. The sound q has been introduced in the middle and does not appear at the beginning or at the end of the word, and the sound ʔ has been presented in the middle of the word, and once only in the whole of the texts in the second part.

It is worth mentioning that the difficult sounds have been given as examples since they cause more problems than others. It seems to me that paying attention to the difficult Arabic sounds is a matter for consideration. As has been commonly recommended, all sounds which have been presented in the oral stage must be represented in the written stage and especially in the stage in which the learner sees the sound symbol for the first time. My point is that the whole stage, including sounds,

dialogues, expressions, grammatical items and vocabulary, has to be represented in the second part. That will ensure that every item that has been pronounced will be seen in writing. Some examples from the second part of the book show how such a procedure is important. The distinction between the sounds q and k has been presented orally in the first lesson of the book (Unit One), but they have been represented in writing only in Unit 13.

The distinction between h and h which is presented in the second unit of the oral stage, has been represented in written form in Unit 18, which is in the third part of the book. The distinction between d and d will not be seen in the writing unit until the student reaches Unit 23 of the fourth part of the text-book. It seems that such a presentation will not lead to effective learning. It is, therefore, fair to re-introduce the oral stage with its contents in the first written part of the book.

#### **4.1.3.3 DRILLS**

In the second part of Arabic for beginners the drills cover comprehensively the teaching points which have been presented in the original texts. Practice of reading and writing, in addition to sound

abstraction have also received attention. Things such as the difference between the alif and hamza, the difference between doubled and undoubled letters and the long and short vowels have been exercised clearly. Despite the fact that the abstraction of sounds has been introduced in a colourfully attractive way, the book has started with sounds which take different shapes when written. Sounds which take only one shape should be the first to be dealt with when abstracting the Arabic sounds. Indeed, the presentation of these sounds will help the student to learn the Arabic language gradually and progressively.

#### **4.1.4 CONCLUSION**

Arabic for Beginners is one of the basic text-books which has been taught in the Arabic Language Institute in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia (A.L.I.). This book is considered to be the first part of the series which has been prepared for teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages. It consists of five parts, including the oral stage with which the book starts.

In the oral stage, the book tries to present sounds orally, clarifying the distinction between them and depending on pictures only. The analyses

of this part, however, indicate that the presentation of sounds has not been taken into full consideration. In the second part of the book, the circulation and the distinction of sounds does not show up well. It might be said generally that the introduction of many other items has been on account of presenting sounds properly. The examination of the two parts of the book shows that consonant and vowel sounds are presented fairly, despite the fact that some sounds have not been given enough attention. The abstraction of sounds, their presentation through meaningful words, the drills and exercises, and the consideration of the psychological and educational elements, are all positive points to be commended in the analysed parts.

## **4.2 ANALYSIS OF VOCABULARY IN THE TEXT BOOK "ARABIC FOR BEGINNERS"**

The treatment of individual words is considered to be a major element in the teaching of a language. In addition, these items are regarded as an important basic corner-stone upon which the student relies for the purpose of delivering information to others and attaining better communication skills. Any teaching book will not satisfy the required and needed standard unless it pays attention to these items from various angles - such as the number of words, their types and how to introduce them to the student. If items are not put in the text-book in a proper way, the students will be demotivated and disappointed. Consequently, the whole learning process may fail completely.

It is worth point out important elements have been taken into consideration when analysing the text book for Arabic beginners, such as the number of words in each lesson, the number of words in the whole book, the kind of items which may be either concrete or abstract, content words and functional words. In addition, these words have been examined on the basis of whether they are derived or synonyms, and whether they are foreign or native.

It is worth pointing out that there are specific criteria on which the analysis of vocabulary in the text book for Arabic beginners is based. Among these criteria are:-

1. The analysis has been based on the basic texts of the book, as what is brought up in the drills is a kind of repetition of what has been taught in the basic text.
2. The treatment of items, whether they are content words or functional words, has been made on the basis that content words include nouns, verbs and adjectives while other words which will be regarded as functional words will include, for instance, prepositions, question markers and the like.
3. Concrete and abstract items have been analysed according to the nouns only.

Thus, in the light of the aforementioned considerations, the book for beginners (Part I) has been analysed in order to recognise both positive and negative aspects of using words in the text book prepared solely for teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers.

Moreover, it is essential to mention that analysis begins at Part II, since Part I of the book is just the oral stage in which the written words do not appear.



#### **4.2.1 The number of words**

It is not an easy task to determine what the exact number of words in each lesson of the book should be because such a determination is subject to various considerations such as the age of the student, the object of the lesson, the topic under discussion, the kind of words and their length, and whether such words are of a general or special nature, the difficulty of the sounds that exist in the word itself, the student's ability, the cultural background, and, finally, the educational level of the student and so on.

Thus, it has become clear that there are many complicated factors that play a role in considering the items to include in a text book which aims solely at teaching the Arabic language to non-native speakers.

It is noteworthy that the key factor in discussing the number of words and their kinds is the avoidance of imbalances between lessons. For instance, a great number of words are introduced in the first lesson. The number is then decreased substantially in the second lesson, and suddenly the number of words is increased once again and so on. Indeed these big changes in the number of words in each lesson, in my opinion, create

educational and psychological problems for the student. Naturally, the first lesson starts with specific words. Then there is an increase in the words used, until we reach a reasonable limit which takes into consideration the objective and purposes of the lesson.

It is important to refer to some of the books which are designed for the teaching of Arabic to non-native speakers before we start analysing our book. Some teaching books exaggerate the introduction of a great number of words in the first lessons. There are also text books which introduce such a limited number of words that they are defective. طعيمة and الناقه (1983:216) found in their study that text books introduced a very limited vocabulary in the first lesson (up to 5 words) while some books introduced 103 words in the first lesson. Moreover, there were some books which started with 34 words in the first lesson, but only 9 in the second lesson. The number of words then increased considerably to 35 in the third lesson. There are some books which begin with 19 words, increase to 40 in the second, and finally end with 19 in the third lesson. Another book starts with 21 words in the first lesson, 55 in its second, rising dramatically to 103 words in the third lesson. (For more information, see طعيمة and الناقه (1983:216)).

From the above it appears that there are text books designed for

the teaching of the Arabic language to non-native speakers which do not follow any principle of gradation or balance and consequently there are not very well-planned in the presentation of words. In Part II of Arabic for Beginners, the words arranged, as follows: 14, 15, 15, 15, 23, 28; while in the third part the following items, based on their units were presented:- 15, 20, 20, 22, 22, 37. In the fourth part, the following items were presented:- 20, 28, 29, 26, 34, 38. Finally, the fifth part of the book presented the words that were allocated to two lessons in each unit except in its sixth unit where the book presented three lessons. It may be that such a procedure is due to authorial complacency and presumption that the student has reached such a level that he is capable of comprehending and grasping a greater number of items. In the first lesson of the fifth part the following items were presented: 31, 27, 16, 30, 23, 33; in the second lesson of the same section, the following words were presented: 28, 24, 27, 23, 26, 23. Finally, in the last lesson of the fifth part it was found that the book presented 28 items (See Table 1). It appears that the number of items in the book has been presented in a proper and reasonable manner as its obvious from the fact that there were no big gaps throughout the presentation of its various parts. However, the second lesson of the fifth part presented 27 words while there were 16 words in the following lesson,

although, this cannot be compared to the distribution of words in the book in general. In addition, there may be an excuse or strong ground for this variance in the number of items in each lesson to the length of the dialogue, the length of the words or the nature of the texts themselves.

Table 1 indicates that the proportions of the words for the first four sections have been as follows:- 14%, 18%, 23%, while the proportions of the words for the fifth part (which contains 3 lessons) were as follows: 21%, 20% and 4%. It is noteworthy that the proportion of 4% represents only one lesson which contains 28 words only.

In addition, Table 1 presents the items in a very reasonable light. The items have been presented in the book in a gradual manner according to their percentage and, above all, there are no clear variances amongst the various sections of the book. Moreover, it may be of interest to mention that the 45% of the book's words which came in the last part is a healthy phenomenon which indicates that the book has introduced a relevant number of items in its first units based on the progress and the improvement achieved by the student.

Moreover, table 1 also indicates that 110 words were introduced in the second part, 136 items in the third part, 175 words in the fourth part. This level of vocabulary is considered reasonable. The fifth part contains a

large number of items, taking into consideration that this part has numerous lessons . Consequently, the book introduced 339 words in this fifth part.

As regards the units in each part, it has been found that the book presented in its units the following words:-

- 108 words in the first unit,
- 114 words in the second unit in each part,
- 107 words in the third unit in each part,
- 116 words in the fourth unit in each part,
- 128 words in the fifth unit in each part,
- 186 words in the sixth unit in each part.

This means that there is an obvious increase and a considerable proportion between the units and the parts.

Also, Table 1 shows that some words have been repeated throughout the book. By comparing the total number of the tabulated items, which is equal to 760 words, including original words presented in the book, equal to 446 original words which have not been repeated, it has been found that there are a large number of words which are repeated throughout the book. This phenomenon is to be regarded as healthy and an added advantage in this book.

From the previous discussion, it can be said that the presentation of words in terms of their number has been considered in the preparation of the book. This has been proved to be true, as the allocation of words to the units and parts was made in a proper and relevant way, and this did not lead to the emergence of obvious differences. Moreover, the graduation in the use of words in the units and parts has been relevant, especially when considering the background of students who belong to different nationalities and who, consequently, have different cultural backgrounds and various linguistic levels.

#### **4.2.2 The New and Old Words**

There is another factor that should be taken into consideration when including words in a text book. This factor is the presentation of a number of words in a specific lesson then ignoring the presentation of these words again throughout the remaining lessons of the book. This situation means that words which were taught in the first lesson might be forgotten by the time the student reaches for instance, the tenth lesson. The situation will get worse concerning words which are presented only once. In this respect it might be mentioned that there are two important

procedures concerning the presentation of the new words. One of these procedures is that the teacher or the text book writer tends to repeat the same words in the drills of the same lesson intensively to ensure that the student has become capable of using these words effectively and understands them and uses them practically. The other procedure is that the teacher employs some of the old words with the new words in each new lesson.

However, there is no agreement regarding the number of both old and new words presented in each lesson. This is subject to the approach which the book follows and the teaching method adopted, and, finally, the ultimate objective behind the presentation of words in the text book. Yet, as a rule of thumb, the number of the new words is usually more than that of old ones. In fact, the obvious and prevailing weight is assigned to the new words upon which the new lesson relies. This, of course, will help the student to enrich his vocabulary so that he can be capable of using the language.

This principle, the proportion of new words to old words, has been taken into consideration when analysing the items of the book designed for beginners. This is because such a book is taught, at the most crucial stage of study. Therefore, both new and old words should be considered to help the non-native speakers to understand the Arabic language.

Now we move to Table 2 which indicates that the book has introduced a number of new and old words. The first unit of Part II, is the first part of the book in which the student deals with the written words. The book starts with 14 words which are completely new to a beginner faced with his first lesson. In the second unit, 13 new words were introduced contrary to just 2 old words. In the third unit, 12 new words were presented in contrast with 3 old words. In the fourth unit, 11 new words were introduced compared with 4 old words. The fifth unit contained 16 new words and 7 old words. Finally in the sixth unit, 13 new words and 15 old were introduced.

Table 2 indicates that the new words are more than old words in the third part which balance as follows:- 10-5, 15-5, 13-7, 12-10, 13-9, 25-12. In the fourth part of the book, both new and old words have been as follows:- 15-5, 20-8, 17-12, 17-9, 18-16 and 21-17. Therefore, it is obvious that the number of new words was still more than the old words introduced in the book.

Finally, it has been found that the last part of the book contained 3 distinctive lessons where the words of the first lesson were as follows:- 18-13, 12-15, 8-8, 19-11, 8-5 and 16-17. In the meantime, the second lesson has presented 17 new words and 11 old; then it has introduced 17-7,



13-14, 7-16, 14-12 and, finally, it has presented 11 new words and 12 old ones while the third lesson has contained 28 items, of which 11 were new and 17 old words.

Thus, it appears from the previous description that the authors of the book have followed the proportionality principle, which takes into consideration the proportion of new words to the old ones, since Table 2 shows that there are more new than old words.

It is noteworthy that (as shown in Table 2) the greater the increase in new words, the greater the relative increase in old. This is, of course, not only desirable, but required, if the book is to be beneficial in the teaching process.

However, the book has sometimes introduced a greater number of old than new words, as in the fourth unit of the fifth part, where 16 old words and only 7 new ones were introduced. Therefore, it may be argued that this unit does not follow the principle of proportionality. As a matter of fact, it is expected that when the student has reached the last section of the book, such an achievement means that he has been taught a great number of words which may make the author employ a larger number of them for the purpose of revision or that he has to use specific items which were previously taught and which are relevant to a particular topic.

Generally speaking, it can be said that the book which introduces a number of new items will help enrich the student's vocabulary. In addition, the book uses a number of words previously taught to the student. In fact, the table indicates that 79 new words were presented in the second part compared with 31 old ones, while the third part presented 88 new words compared with 48 old ones, and the fourth part contained 108 new words in contrast with 67 old ones. In the fifth section, 171 new words and 169 old ones were introduced. This, of course, shows clearly that the number of new words is always more than the old ones according to the principle of proportionality which is adopted when both new and old words are presented in such a book (see Table 2).

#### **4.2.3 The Content Words Versus the Functional Words**

There is another aspect which concerns those who are involved in the preparation and the authorship of educational books meant for teaching foreign languages. This aspect is related to words which are divided into two categories:- (a) the content words and (b) the functional words, which may be known as the grammatical items.

Content words are the complete words which give a specific

meaning such as nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, while functional words include items which have no specific meaning if they are introduced in isolation from the content words. These functional words include, for instance, conjunctions, prepositions, interrogatives, and the like.

Content words are usually the most frequent words in a book which is intended for teaching foreign languages because the content words are the joining words which are mutually helpful in the clarification of their meaning. Therefore, content words are considered to be greater in proportion to the functional words. Yet, this does not mean that these words are of no significance. Indeed, these words are as significant as the content words since both kinds are important for teaching a foreign language to non-native speakers.

It is noteworthy that the authors of books which are designed for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers, pay great attention to the function and content words when introducing such words in the text book. Therefore, such an aspect has been examined and assessed when analysing the book entitled Arabic for Beginners, Part 1. Table 3 indicates both content and function words which were introduced in the book as follows:-

- In the second part, the book presented 10 content words and 4 function ones in the first unit.

- In the second unit, there were 11:4 content and function words respectively.
- In the third unit, there were 12:3 content and function words respectively.
- In the fourth unit, there were 11:4 content and function words respectively.
- In the fifth unit, there were 16:7 content and function words respectively.
- Finally, in the sixth unit, there were 22:6 content and function words respectively.

It is clear that there are more content than function words. This is good.

Table 3 indicates that the third part of the book presented the content and function words as follows:- 10:5, 14:6, 15:5, 16:6, 15:7 and 30:7. It can also be noted that both content and function words have been introduced on the basis of the proportionality principle as, from the linguistic point of view, the function words are considered to be a complement to content words.

The fourth part of the book continues to introduce items which follow the same rules. It introduces 17 content and 3 function words in its first unit, then it introduces 19 content and 9 function words, while the

third unit introduces 23 content words in contrast to 6 function words. The fifth unit introduces 22 content items compared with 12 function words and, finally, the sixth unit introduces 32 content words and 6 function ones. Once again, the examination of Table 3 indicates that the fifth part contains 3 units which can be analysed as follows:-

The words of the first lesson were 24:7, 21:6, 13:3, 23:7, 18:5 and 29:4.

The second lesson words were 20:8, 17:7, 20:7, 18:5, 20:6 and 19:4.

A thorough examination of Table 3 has shown that content items are more than function ones throughout the units of the book. Moreover, content words, in general, increase as long as the number of words increases as well in the same lesson. It is noteworthy that some lessons have many compound words, especially when the lesson aims at introducing grammatical items such as prepositions, question markers, pronouns and the like. Indeed, content words are to be considered as the words upon which the text of the book and its dialogues relies. Therefore, content words have a very significant preponderance throughout the book.

Indeed, the proportion of function to content words throughout the sections of the book has been as expected since the authors followed the proportionality principle. There were 82 content words in the second part, contrasting with 28 function ones, whereas 100 content words in the third

part compared with 36 function ones, and 135 content words in the fourth part as compared with 40 function words were found. The analysis of the fifth part has shown that it contains 267 content words compared to 72 function words (see Table 3).

Moreover, the comparison between content and function words throughout the parts of the book has indicated that there is an association between them. For instance, it was found that the first unit in all sections introduced the function and content words in a proportionate way. This is, of course, important when preparing a basic Arabic book for non-native speakers since there will be a correlation between parts. This, once again, indicates that there are no wide gaps in the linguistic content as the student moves from the first part of the book to the second part, continuing until he reaches the end of the book. In addition, the absence of gaps between the parts of one book indicates the same absence of such gaps in the Arabic Series books for beginners which include 6 books prepared for various levels of teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

#### **4.2.4 Concrete Words Versus Abstract Words**

The pictures and other visual aids are to be considered as supporting means for retaining information in one's mind for a long period.

The student will have a strong motive for learning visible and concrete things as he sees such things in front of him. This, of course, will save the student's and teacher's time. Explaining the abstract things will, of course, take longer for the teacher because these may not always be immediately grasped or easily understood.

From the above discussion, it follows that the authors of the book prepared especially for beginners pay much attention to choosing and selecting concrete and abstract words. These authors, therefore, mostly start by introducing concrete words first, as the beginner may not grasp and understand his teacher's explanation because he has not yet achieved the level at which he can be capable of understanding the words which his teacher introduces. Words such as 'book', 'pen' and 'window' are undoubtedly items which save the effort and time of the teacher when compared with abstract words such as 'peace', 'freedom' and 'prosperity'.

It is noteworthy that the book entitled Arabic for Beginners which is now under analysis has taken this aspect into consideration. Items have been analysed in all parts in order to determine the concrete and abstract words. It should be noted that we depended on the nouns only when dealing

with concrete and abstract words. This is because the majority of linguists agree on categorizing words into two groups; concrete and abstract. If abstract and concrete words are generalised to nouns only they will be known as "Abstract and concrete nouns". This means that verbs and pronouns will be excluded as the abstract and concrete principle cannot be applied. Therefore, many words which were found in the lessons of the book such as adjectives, pronouns and the like will be ignored when counting the abstract and concrete words despite the fact that they were counted throughout the lessons of the book.

Table 4 shows that the items of the book have been distributed as follows:-

- In the second part, the book presented 2 concrete and 2 abstract words in its first unit.
- In the second unit, it introduced one concrete and two abstract items.
- In the third unit, it introduced 4 concrete and 2 abstract items.
- In the fourth unit, it presented one concrete and one abstract item.
- In the fifth unit, it introduced 6 concrete and 3 abstract items.
- In the sixth unit, it presented 2 concrete and 5 abstract words.



In the third part of the book, the items were as follows:-

5 concrete words and no abstract words, 4 concrete and 3 abstract items, 2 concrete and 3 abstract items, 3 concrete and 2 abstract items, and finally 7 concrete and 6 abstract items.

In the fourth section of the book, the concrete and abstract words have been found to be as follows:- 5 concrete and 2 abstract words, 9 concrete and 3 abstract words, 7 concrete and 4 abstract words, 4 concrete and 4 abstract items, 7 concrete and 4 abstract items, and finally, 7 concrete and 4 abstract items.

In the fifth part (a) of the book, the concrete and abstract words were as follows:- 7 concrete and 4 abstract words, 5 concrete and 5 abstract ones, 6 concrete and 2 abstract, 5 concrete and 3 abstract words and finally, 9 concrete and 5 abstract words.

In the fifth part (b) of the book, the concrete and abstract words were as follows:- 6 concrete and 3 abstract words, 5 concrete and 2 abstract words, 9 concrete and 1 abstract word, 3 concrete and 3 abstract words, 12 concrete and 3 abstract words and finally, 12 concrete and 4 abstract words.

Finally in the fifth section (c) of the book, the concrete and abstract words were as follows:- 15 concrete and 3 abstract items.

From the previous presentation, it can be seen that the number of concrete words was greater than that of the abstract words throughout all the book except in unit No. 6 of the first part. However, the number of concrete items may be lower as the book did not introduce a number of nouns which refer to concrete things in an obvious way. This situation may be due to the approach followed by the authors of the book as they mentioned that their focus was on presenting the elements of the language and its skills in a very inter-related and comprehensive way. Therefore, the parts of the book use the kind of words that include the various grammatical rules and different expressions used in daily life. Also, the book contains numerals, perhaps explaining the reason for the number of concrete words being fewer in the book.

#### **4.2.5 Compound Words**

One should take into consideration the various aspects related to the words which will be introduced in the text book. The aim is to facilitate the learning process for a new foreign student who has no knowledge of the sounds and words of that foreign language. It should be

noted that the length of the word and the difficulty of its sound may cause difficulty to the author of the book when he is estimating the number of items that will be presented in the book. As a matter of fact, there are some words that can be easily grasped and understood, while there are some words that will, of course, take more time and effort.

It is noteworthy that the foreign student who encounters compound words will meet difficulties when he starts learning the language. Therefore, the authors and those who are responsible for the preparation of text-books are conscious of introducing such compound words in the first lessons. In addition, it should be noted that there are compound words such as *رأس مال* , *حضرموت* , while there are those that can be labelled one word, consisting of two elements, such as hand bag, text book, bedroom and so on.

On the examination of the book Arabic for Beginners which is under assessment, a number of compound words have been found throughout the various parts of the book. Table 5 indicates that the first lesson of the second part contains two compound words. Indeed, the use of these compound words should be avoided. Moreover, such compound words may have a negative effect on the beginner who has just started learning the language. While no compound words appeared in the second and third units, there were two compound words in each of the fifth and sixth units. Also,

there were some compound words in the third part which has 7 compound words, and 7 other compound words were included in the fourth part. As regards the fifth part, there were compound words in three lessons:- 14 compound words in lesson (a); 14 in lesson (b) and just one in lesson (c) (see Table 5).

It should be noted that the authors of the book may face some difficulty in avoiding such compound words owing to the fact that discourses and conversations need compound words such as the 'living room', 'Friday prayer', 'football', 'fifth floor', 'fifteenth floor' etc. These compound words do, therefore, exist in the text book designed especially for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers. Indeed, an experienced author of these kinds of books should avoid the use of such compound words, particularly in the first lessons of the book.

Based on the previous discussion, it can be said that the Book Arabic for Beginners has been produced in a reasonable and relevant manner in terms of the number and quality of compound words introduced.

#### **4.2.6 Synonymous Words**

Synonyms are to be regarded as one of the linguistic phenomena that exist in the majority of languages. By "synonym" is meant that there

are two terms that have one meaning. These allow the student to use various words when dealing with a new language instead of using only one term to be repeated several times. Therefore, synonyms need to be taken into consideration, especially when the student starts writing.

It is noteworthy that there is no agreement as regards the use of certain words that offer synonymity. Moreover, there is no study showing the extent to which students are able to learn synonyms. Yet there may be a disposition towards moderation in the use of synonyms when beginning to teach a new language. Some authors insist on presenting only one meaning for one word, lest the student be confused by the multitude of meanings.

The language teaching books differ in the approach followed in the introduction and the presentation of synonyms. Some authors may prefer the use of lists for the introduction of synonyms of the original word. These lists are to be put at the end of the lesson or at the end of the book itself. Some authors may present these synonyms through an additional reading book or in a drill book.

The examination of the book Arabic for Beginners shows that synonyms are found in the text itself. In some lessons just few words with

theirs synonym were found. It is clear that Arabic for Beginners intended to introduce a very few synonyms. This may give an indication that the book's authors did not generally incline towards the use of synonyms with beginners. Indeed the rarity of synonyms, particularly in the first book, supports such a point of view. However, synonyms are generally the focus of drills.

#### **4.2.7 Antonyms Words**

Antonyms are to be regarded as another aspect that has the interest of those who are made responsible for the preparation of teaching matter when using words in the textbook. The Arabic language is the same as other languages in being are rich in antonyms which give an opposite meaning. While the use of synonyms may confuse the beginner, antonyms may be recommended to be adopted as a principle for the presentation of Arabic words. As a matter of fact, the waste of time and effort in explaining the word "black", for example, or the word "above", can be avoided through showing only the antonym for these two words as follows:- "white; - under". This will help the student to link a certain word with other words. Moreover, this approach will become clear when other means are used such

as a picture, sketch, video tapes and T.V., etc.

Based on the previous discussion, it was found that Arabic for Beginners, Part II did not take the antonym phenomenon into consideration to a great extent. Only 2 words in the second unit, 2 words in the fifth unit and just one word in the fourth unit were found. Also, in the third part, only one word in each of the second, fourth and fifth units was found. The fourth part has only one word in the first unit; one word in the fourth unit and 2 words in the sixth unit. Finally, the last part (No. 5) of the book presented only 2 antonym words in the sixth unit of section (a), 2 words in the sixth unit of section (b), and only one word in the last section (c) (see Table 6).

Thus, it seems that the authors of the book Arabic for Beginners did not generally favour synonyms and antonyms. This avoidance of the use of synonyms and antonyms may reflect a specific view-point of the authors of this book.

#### **4.2.8 Derivational Words**

Derivation is considered to be one of the major advantages of the living language enriching it continuously by the addition of new words. The Arabic language has been considered as one of the major languages with

respect to its richness in derivational words, since it has many terms and expressions which are used for indicating multiple concepts and things.

Derivational words should be taken into consideration when a text book is to be examined and assessed. Derivation will have a significant impact on enriching the student with a broad vocabulary and giving him an idea of the significant attributes and character of the Arabic language. The advantages include, for instance, the student's realisation of the change in meaning and sound, in addition to the feeling that the Arabic language is an easy language.

However, derivation may have bad effects especially on the beginners, if it is wrongly used or introduced too soon. An attempt was made to evaluate the book with regard to its treatment of derivational words. It was found that the second section had only two derivational words. The absence of derivational words in the first sections of the books designed and prepared for the first level students would be deliberate. Therefore, derivational words are to be presented throughout the next sections of the book. The third part of the book presented some derivational words ranging from 2-7 words through its different units. The book introduced derivational words in each unit of its fourth part as follows:- 2, 4, 5, 2, 4 and 3. As regards the fifth part (a), the derivational words were



as follows:- 3, 4, 2, 3 and 4 while the derivational words in the fifth part (b), were as follows:- 4, 2, 1, 2 and 2. Finally, there were only 2 derivational words in the fifth part (c) (see Table 7).

In relation to the presentation of the derivational words it may be mentioned that the emergence of some words which have the same roots in a specific lesson will bring to the attention of the student, in my view, that such a word has a link with another word. Consequently, this will help the student to connect the multiple concepts and forms of only one word.

#### **4.2.9 The Repetition of Words in the Book**

The introduction and the presentation of the words in a text book does not mean placing these words without organising and arranging them. In fact, pedagogical criteria and principles determine the use of words in a text book prepared especially for teaching foreign languages. The principle of repetition determines the recurrence of the word in the book. There are some words that are used just once in the book, while some words are repeated more than once, judging by the nature of the subject and the kind of words needed to be focused on in the book. Of course, the experienced author is the one who can repeat the use of particular words for the purpose of

instilling such words in the student's memory to help him use such words in his communication with other people and in reading and writing.

From the previous discussion, it is important to determine to what extent Arabic for Beginners has considered the principle of repetition. It should be noted that when calculating the number of repetitions, the word has been considered only once. This means that if the word were repeated 3 times in one lesson, it would be counted only once.

Table 8 indicates the repetition of the words in Arabic for Beginners including the content and functional words. It was found that 293 content words were used in the book once, which represents 75% of the content words in the book. On the other hand, there were 93 content words repeated two or three times. This repetition is, in my view, reasonable, as a key objective of the book is to provide the student with a great number of the words intended to be used in the book.

Turning once again to Table 8, will show that 8 content words were repeated 4 or 5 times and another 6 context words were repeated more than 5 times. In other words, it can be said that about 25 per cent of the content words were repeated more than once. As regards the function words (which are much fewer than content words since content words represent the majority of the vocabulary while function words represent only a part of

the vocabulary), it was found that 16 function words were repeated only once.

It was found that there were 12 function words repeated two or three times while 5 words were repeated four or five times and 14 words were repeated more than five times.

It should be noted that the repetition of words, including function words, depends on their importance. Function words such as pronouns, prepositions and question markers are, of course, words that should occur in the book more than once given the necessity of using them. This, of course, indicates why 16 words were repeated just once while some words were repeated 5 times or more throughout the book (see Table 8).

In all, it was found that 309 words, content and function words, in the book were repeated only once, which represents 69 per cent of the book's words: 105 content and function words were repeated two or three times representing 24 per cent of the book's words, 13 words were used 4 or 5 times, representing 3 per cent and finally there were 20 words repeated more than 5 times, representing 4 per cent of the total content and function words of the book, i.e. 446 words (see Table 8).

#### **4.2.10 General Notes on Words**

Through the examination and analysis of the sections of Arabic for Beginners, it was found that the book has no disposition towards the use of local words or the use of the variant dialects. Moreover, the authors of the book discourage the student from the use of the local words and variant dialects to avoid confusion. In addition, there were no foreign words used in the book. As a matter of fact, all words used in the dialogues and drill are derived from contemporary formal Arabic language.

However, there were some foreign words used in the book, but such as are used in standard Arabic, e.g. 'T.V.', 'radio set', 'bank', 'telephone'. Yet some authors see the necessity of attempting to seek out the equivalents of these foreign words in the Arabic language. This in my view, may be in vain as these foreign words have become part of the Arabic language and, above all, they have become common in the various languages of the students. The use of such foreign words is to be considered as positive from the educational point of view since these words can be used as clues and keys to some sentences and expressions used in the dialogues and conversations of the book.

As regards the drills, it should be noted that many words used in the original texts were given enough drills to be practised by students. Yet

there were many words used in the book which were not introduced in the text itself. This may be, in my view, one of the defects of the book, since the basic principle is to introduce only such words as were presented in the text itself, except in some cases. For example, the student may study the numbers:- 1, 2, 3 and 4 since the teacher (or the book) can introduce the sequence of numbers, even if these numbers were not in the text itself. Moreover, the book may present such names as **احمد**, **عادل** and **حسان** and, in the meantime, it introduces other names that may be the names of the students in the class. In such a case there is nothing to criticise.

It is important that the book should not introduce new words which the student has not been made familiar with, or has not even met. Therefore, it is advised that the focus should be on the repetition of the same words used in the dialogue, instead of new ones in the drills.

In addition, it was found that most lessons of the book introduced original words in the dialogues, then these words would be well drilled through the lesson itself. Thus, the authors may have intended to introduce the words and to be sure that the student had become capable of understanding them before moving to another unit. Therefore, most words that were presented in a particular lesson were rarely repeated in the other lessons.

Moreover, it was noted that drills usually concentrated on the function words such as question markers, prepositions and connectives. The reason behind the use of these function words is to drill students in those grammatical words in which the student usually make mistakes, regarding them as content words. However, it should be stressed that both function and content words should be included in the drills in a way that leads to a better understanding of their meaning and use.

Generally, it can be said that there was a plan concerning all sections of the book towards a repetition of old words previously introduced in earlier lessons. However, many words of the dialogues and drills were presented in the text itself, while some new words were neither introduced in the text nor in the previous lessons.

It is noteworthy that there are a variety of words used in the basic texts and drills. For example, it was found that the book introduced a variety of words such as concrete words, nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs and numbers. In other words, the book attempted to deal with the language on a wider basis from the beginning of the first book, which is considered to be the introduction to the Arabic language for the new student, enabling him to recognise its nature, characteristics and content.

Finally, one of the best points about the book is that it does not introduce words in isolation, but through context, making it clear and easy for the student to become familiar with the use of the word in sentences and every day expressions.

#### **4.2.11 Summary**

The treatment of words plays a significant role in the teaching of any foreign language. This aspect of language should therefore be considered when analysing and evaluating any book designed for the teaching of Arabic to the non-native speaker.

A thorough examination of the words of Arabic for Beginners has been made for the purpose of determining how the words of this book were presented and introduced to beginners who are, of course, not familiar with the Arabic language.

It can be said that the authors of the aforementioned book considered many principles concerning its preparation. The number of words used in each lesson is carefully considered, since it has been found that the lesson did not introduce too many or too few words, making it unsuitable for beginners. By taking into consideration that the book is a series which

consists of 6 parts, it can be said that 446 words are to be regarded as relevant and reasonable, as this number of words is essential for a good command of the language. This number of words, gradually introduced in the book, provides further proof that great care was taken in its preparation and organisation.

The presentation of both old and new words is carefully considered, as evidenced by the number of both old and new words found in all lessons. It was also found that occasionally the number of old words was greater than or equivalent to that of new words. This may be due to revision or the achievement of a special objective adopted by the authors for a specific target.

It is noteworthy that the book considered both content and function words and introduced a relevant number of both, taking into consideration that content words should account for the bulk of the vocabulary, whereas function words represent just a part.

The book also considered both concrete and abstract words. It introduced concrete words representing things which can be touched, seen or referred to by the student. This aspect is very important, as the beginner deals more with concrete than abstract words when starting to learn a foreign language.



However, the book may deserve criticism. It did not introduce a large enough number of concrete words that the student may deal with in a sufficient way. Moreover the book considered generally the significance of compound words since it did not introduce such compound words that may deter the student from the learning of the foreign language.

Antonyms have a significant impact on the teaching of a foreign language. The book under analysis did not consider these antonyms sufficiently. On the other hand, it avoided causing any confusion to the beginner regarding synonyms. It did not give a number of meanings for the one word. Consequently, it contained only a few synonyms.

The book's treatment of derivational words is to be commended. Their introduction was withheld until the later lessons, by which stage the student should have progressed sufficiently to be able to grasp their significance in the language, and to understand how they can be used to discover the multiple meanings of words.

It was also found that the book drew aids retention of the words by repetition through the lessons of the book. The words were repeated in the lessons according to their importance in the lessons. Therefore some words were repeated just once while other words were repeated more than once. These include function and content words.

The authors of the book did not use dialect and foreign words except those foreign words that have become a part of the Arabic language and can be considered to be among its lexical stock.

As regards the drills of the book, it was found that drills related to a specific unit were presented in a very comprehensive way that covered the words of this unit. This would, of course, redress any short-coming in the basic texts. Yet there were many words introduced in the texts which were not presented adequately in the drills. Conversely, there were some words introduced in the drills which were not originally in the text itself.

To sum up, Arabic for Beginners , which was designed and prepared especially for the non-native speaker (level one), emphasised the use of the language. Moreover, the authors of the book dealt with all aspects of learning in a very positive and constructive way.

#### **4.3 THE ANALYSIS OF CONSTRUCTION IN THE TEXT-BOOK.**

##### **ARABIC FOR BEGINNERS**

Arabic for Beginners, which is the subject of our analysis in this section, consists of five parts and each part is composed of six units, including a revision unit labelled "Unit Six" which is located at the end of each part.

Our examination of the grammatical constructions of the book aims at establishing how these have been manipulated and distributed throughout the whole book. An examination of the units of the book will help us understand the entire content of the book and its underlying plan of arrangement and sequencing. It is worth remarking in this context that the patterns which the student learns through listening and speaking in the oral stage must be repeated as, it is expected that everything the student listens to and utters at this stage will recur in subsequent stages where he has to use the acquired information in the practical sessions.

### **4.3.1 The Oral Stage**

The authors of the book under consideration indicate that their text-book does not concentrate only on introducing the sounds of Arabic and the distinctions between them in the oral stage but that it also deals with patterns, expressions and numbers, which the beginner must learn. Furthermore, they divide the dialogues in this part, as it is the case with the dialogues in the other parts of the book, into expressions and syntactic items which are generally distributed all over the book.

#### **- The First Unit**

If we examine the first unit of the oral stage, we find that it contains the following:-

- an idea about the Islamic based greetings and how to initiate them, e.g.  
"السلام عليكم";
- the nominal sentence introduced by "أنا";
- the verbal sentence with a verb in the first person singular;
- questions beginning with "هل", e.g. "هل لعب معك";
- other expressions like "اهلاً وسهلاً"; and,

- the imperative form of the verb, e.g. "تعال".

Though the items cited in the first lesson are reasonable from the viewpoint of their number and distribution, there are some additional topics which, while appearing in the drills, are not specified in the previously outlined aims of the lesson. The following are examples of such materials:-

- the interrogative particle "ماذا"; and,
- the pronoun which is suffixed to a preposition, e.g. "معك".

On further examination of the units of the book, I have come to the conclusion that the foregoing failings are present in some, but not necessarily all, lessons.

### **- The Second Unit**

The aim of this unit is to provide further information on the different types of greeting:-

- addressing the feminine counterpart by manipulating the imperative form of the verb with "vocative particle. y (ياء)" and,
- using the imperfect form in the first person plural, e.g. "نرسم شجرة" and "نلعب كرة".

### **- The Third Unit**

The main concern of this unit is to introduce:-

- more Arabic-specific greetings, e.g. "صباح النور" "صباح الخير", etc.;
- the construction of interrogative sentences with "من" (man) and "أين" ;
- the use of the preposition "من" (min); and,
- the formation of nominal sentences, e.g. "غسان غائب" and "صابر في المسجد".

However, among the material which has been furnished in the unit are many sentences which start with verbs like "يسأل", "يقرأ", "يصلّي", "يقول", "يدخل", etc. These verbs have all been introduced simultaneously in a single lesson which does not designed for the utilisation of the imperfect form.

#### **- The Fourth Unit**

This unit aims at introducing:

- the vocative mode with "يا";
- some imperative forms of the verb;
- the expressions "تفضل", "عفوا", "شكراً"; and,
- the use of the preposition "إلى".

Furthermore, the vocative particle " يا " (ya) is used to introduce the addresses " يا شاكر " and " يا استاذ ".

It might be mentioned that the "vocative" could have been kept until later in the book when the learner will have reached an advanced stage. However, since the authors insist on employing the "vocative", it could have been more advantageous to introduce it in its two forms, i.e. one which involves the use of the vocative particle " يا " (ya), and the other which does not. To put it differently, the book could have presented the vocative in association with the vocative particle " يا " (ya), as in " يا شاكر أعطني النظارة ", and it could have introduced the same patterns without the vocative particle, e.g. " شاكر أعطني النظارة ". One advantage of using the latter alternative is the opportunity to presents the student to learn the communicative value of information in the oral stage.

#### **- The Fifth Unit**

The primary aim of the book in this unit is to introduce the:-

- demonstrative pronoun;
- interrogative particle " ما " (ma);
- second person masculine singular pronoun; and,
- certain polite expressions " آسف ", " حاضر ", and " ياساتر ".

### - The Sixth Unit

As we have pointed out earlier, this is a revision unit covering everything that has been studied in the preceding five units. The purpose of this revision is the obvious one of assessment by the teacher and consolidation by the learners. If we consider the content of this unit, we will find that it suffers from two short-comings:- (a) it does not present a reasonably comprehensive coverage of the main grammatical units that have been introduced in the preceding units; (b) it presents "revision" materials that have not been covered in the preceding units for example, the verbs " يمشى - يضحك - يعوم " and the two major forms of the definite article, commonly known in the literature as the sun letters and the moon letters.

#### 4.3.2 PART TWO

In this section we will consider the material in Part Two of Arabic for Beginners. The aim of this analysis is to (1) unravel the book's plan (methodology) in presenting and distributing the patterns, and, (2) to establish how the book has dealt in this part with the patterns, expressions and syntactic items which have been presented in the first stage, i.e. the



Oral Stage. The material in part two is organised as follows:-

### **- The First Unit**

The unit aims to introduce patterns, expressions, numerals, syntactic items and sounds which the learners have not encountered in the first unit and which they are expected to practise orally and in writing relying in this respect on the pictures and the script provided. Among the patterns presented in this unit, one may refer to:-

" هذا باسم - هو أندنوسي ", and " هذا عبدالله - هو باكستاني ", which continue the practice of the nominal sentence consisting of subject and predicate.

Furthermore, the unit mentions a great number of nouns, like " لبناني ", " مصري ", which are relative nouns " نسب ". The lesson also aims at introducing the third person masculine singular pronoun " هو " (huwa), and consolidating the expressions which have occurred in part one, such as:- " اهلاً وسهلاً ", " السلام عليكم " and the vocative particle " يا " (ya).

The tendency of reinforcing preceding lessons in subsequent ones is a praise-worthy feature of the book. However it is noticed that in the first lesson of this stage, the book presents a compound noun " عبدالله ", although the notion of compound nouns has not been previously introduced. It would have been more consistent with the level of the learners to introduce the

vocative in the context of simple nouns, e.g. " يا فريد هذا مجدي " and to postpone the introduction of the vocative with compound nouns to a later stage. However, if we consider the construction " يا عبدالله هذا باسم هو أندونوسي ", we find that it is made up of a "vocative particle", vocative compound noun and this (containing the difficult sound " ع " ( ) in Arabic). The grammatical complexity of this sentence, would present a challenge particularly to beginners.

### **- The Second Unit**

The aim of the unit is to train the learners to:-

- respond either by " نعم " or by " لا " to questions initiated by the interrogative particle " هل ";
- use the suffixed possessive pronoun " يا " (ya'), as in " إسمي سمير ";
- the use of the adjectives, e.g. " هذه مدرسة جديدة ";
- utilise " تاء التانيث المربوطه " (i.e. the tied ta' of femininity), e.g. " نيجيرية "; " مصريه ", etc., and,
- introduce the second person feminine singular pronoun " انت " ('anti).

The relative noun ( اسم النسب ) is used frequently in this unit. This

is a favourable tendency since it deploys sections of the preceding lesson in meeting the requirements of the second lesson. The book however uses one style of indicating origin utilising the relative noun only, e.g.

"نعم انا نيجيريه " ; "هل انت نيجيريه - لا انا غانيه " ; "هل انت نيجريه "

Other methods of expressing origin are not used in the book, although it would have been beneficial to do so especially as these alternative methods do not demand any extra expertise other than what has been covered in the book so far, e.g.

" انا نيجيري - انا من نيجيريا "

" نحن كنديون - نحن من كندا "

" هو صومالي - هو من الصومال "

The advantage of presenting these two methods of indicating place of origin is to teach the learner that Arabic uses a variety of syntactic means to achieve the same communicative end.

### **- The Third Unit**

This unit aims at:-

- training the learners to use " هذا " and " هذه " ;
- introducing the conjunction " و " (wa);
- providing further practice in the use of the adjectives and the

interrogative commencing by "هل" (hal); and,

- drilling the learners in the use of certain grammatical forms, e.g. imperfect and the imperative.

The book adequately accounts for the use of "هذا" and "هذه" except that it begins the principal text by introducing "هذه" with the plural. The first sentence in the dialogue-texts of this unit contains the construction "هذه طوابع سوريه" and "هذه طوابع سودانيه". It would have been pedagogically preferable to see "هذه" being used firstly in a singular context, as in "هذه طالبة هنديه" and "هذه سياره بريطانيه" which context has the advantage of being familiar to the learners who have encountered similar patterns in the previous unit.

#### **- The Fourth Unit**

The primary aim of this unit is to train the learners in:-

- using the word جنسية in a game such as what is your nationality to enhance learning potential;
- practising the adverbs "هنا" (huna) and "هناك" (hunak); and,
- utilising the adversative particle "أو".

In this context, the book manipulates the tug-of-war game for introducing the patterns which the learners are required to practise. The

main criticism here is that this game is perhaps unsuitable for mature learners. This is probably why the book does not succeed in formulating sentences containing those patterns. In fact, it restricts itself to using "هنا" and "هناك" in two constructions only, i.e. "تعال هنا" and "اذهب هناك". The lesson could have benefited from the opportunity of utilising "هنا" and "من هناك" in a variety of contexts, e.g. "من هنا", "من هناك", "المدرس خرج من هناك", "ضع الكرسي هنا". It is by means of such contexts that the learner comes to realise that adverbs of the foregoing type could be used in a variety of contexts.

#### **- The Fifth Unit**

This unit aims at introducing the following points:-

- practising the interrogative with "هل" (hal) in the context of a nominal sentence, "هل صديقك طالبه";
- training the learner in the use of the three possessive pronouns "ها" (ha), "ك" (ka) and "يا", e.g. "صورتها", "صورتك", "صورتي".

## **- The Sixth Unit**

As it is the case with every part of the book, the sixth unit is intended as a revision of preceding material. However, on further investigation of this unit, it transpires that:

1. This unit consists of a dialogue-text involving a teacher and two students in the classroom for the purpose of practising certain structures. This contradicts the stipulations laid down in the introduction to the book which emphasise that the content of the sixth unit should merely be a reading text;
2. It provides practice material on the relative noun, but fails to provide adequate drilling of many other points that have been covered earlier in this part, e.g. the pronoun **هو** and certain propositions; and,
3. This unit contains long sentences with, in certain instances, an inversion of the predominant verb-subject order in neutral discourse (see the example below) :-

**المدرس يريد التلميذ النيجيري الجديد**

Owing to these objections we feel that the unit has not fully succeeded in achieving its stated objectives.

### 4.3.3 PART THREE

The following points are covered in this part:-

#### - The First Unit

The first unit aims at:-

- using " بكم " (bikam) consisting of بَاء الثمن (the ba c price) and the interrogative كم to form questions, بكم e.g. " بكم اشتريت هذا القلم ";
- drilling the learners in the use of " من أين " (min 'ain?) type of question;
- training the learners to use and distinguish between the numerals from 3 to 18.

As we have indicated earlier, بكم is used to enquire about the price of an item or object. In using it, learners from certain backgrounds would benefit from the additional information that, in Arabic culture, it is not socially unacceptable to ask a friend how much he paid for a certain item or object he has bought. Information of this type would help free the learner from his culturally imposed inhibitions which he might transfer to the recipient language.

## **- The Second Unit**

This unit sets out the following points:-

- use of coupled interrogative " الي اين انت ذاهب ", e.g. " الي اين ";
- practice the use of " عندي ", " عنده ", " عندك ", " عندها " and " عندك ", as transposed predicates, e.g.  
" عندها حقيبه كبيره ", " عندي قلم جديد ", " عندك كتاب جميل ";
- providing positive answers to questions introduced by the pronoun after " هل ", such as " هل هو مسافر الآن " .

## **- The Third Unit**

This unit provides:-

- practice exercises involving the interrogative particle " لماذا ";
- answers to لماذا questions to indicate the cause - this is done by prefixing the ل which indicates the cause;
- drilling in the employment of the imperative, as in:  
" تعال ", " اسرع ", " انتظر ", " انظر " and,
- further practice in the use of the demonstrative pronoun " هذا " .



and "هذه".

#### **- The Fourth Unit**

This unit provides material the aim of which is to consolidate factors that have been covered earlier. The function of asking questions is augmented by the introduction of the interrogative particle **أين** which asks about a place. The answers given to this type of question in this unit utilise the preposition , ( **في** ) The unit also includes a revision of the interrogative particles " **هل** " , " **من** " , " **ماذا** " , " **ما** " and " **لماذا** ".

#### **- The Fifth Unit**

This unit introduces the following points:-

- prepositional participles, e.g. " **قادم من** " and " **ذاهب الي** " ;
- the use of " **ثم** " and " **عن** " ; and,
- further practice in the use of the causative particle " **لم** " with the imperfect.

#### **- The Sixth Unit**

This unit deals with the following:-

- revising what has already been covered in the previous five units;
- training the learners to understand and comprehend a story with different events.
- introducing the negative of the imperfect by means of " لا ", e.g. " احمد لا يحب التفاح " .

#### **4.3.4 PART FOUR**

##### **- The First Unit**

The following points are covered;-

- the suffixation of the first and second person, ت, forms to the perfect;  
" هل كتبت الدرس ؟ " - first person,  
" هل كتبت الدرس ؟ " - second person;
- the prefixation of the particle س to the imperfect to designate futurity; " سيطلب المدرس الخريطه " ;
- the use of " كم " (kam) with the numerals from 3 to 10, e.g.  
" احضرت ثلاث صور " , " كم صورہ احضرت " ;
- transforming the perfect to the imperfect with the " س " of futurity.

## **- The Second Unit**

The book discusses the following topics in this unit:-

- the use of the first person plural pronoun " نحن " ;
- the suffixation of " نا " (na) to the perfect, e.g. " عملنا " ;
- use of the construct (i.e. annexation), the deletion of the definite article " أل " (al) from the annexed and reading the two words involved as connected whole, e.g., " إنتظرت مشرف النادي " , and, " سمعت عن معرض المدرسه " ;
- the use of the indefinite adjective and its indefinite, qualified noun, e.g. " قراءة قصة قصيره " etc.

## **- The Third Unit**

The book introduces the following items in this unit:-

- using " متى " to enquire about a nominal sentence the answer to which must either be with an adverb or a prepositional phrase (i.e. preposition and its complement), e.g., " التدريب في المساء " , " متى التدريب " , or, " المباراة غداً الخميس " , " متى المباراة " and,

- further practice in negating the imperfect and using " سين " for signifying futurity.

#### **- The Fourth Unit**

The following items are dealt with in this unit:-

- using the ordinal numbers from one to five;
- practising the manipulation of the annexed inchoative, e.g. " اسئلة اللغة العربية "; and,
- transforming the imperfect to the perfect.

#### **- The Fifth Unit**

The following points are introduced in this unit:-

- the formation of questions by means of the interrogative particle " كيف ";
- the use of the preposition " ب ";
- the use of the two conjunctions " ثم " and " و ";
- further practice of the imperfect.

#### **- The Sixth Unit**

The main criticism of this revision unit is that it introduces too much fresh material which the learner has not previously encountered in the book. Thus, instead of concentrating on revision materials proper, the learner in fact is in the demanding position of having to learn new materials, whether lexical or grammatical.

#### **4.3.5 PART FIVE**

##### **(The Final Part)**

##### **- The First Unit**

This unit covers the following functions and grammatical points:-

- telling and answering the time between one and six o'clock, but without using fractions of an hour;
- use of the pronouns " ها " , " هو " , " ك " and " لك " which could be suffixed to both the perfect or the imperfect, e.g.  
" سأزورك " , " سأزورك " , " سأزوره " , " سأزورها " ; and,
- using " متي " with an intransitive verb, e.g. " متي حضر " .

## **- The Second Unit**

The following items are introduced in this unit:-

- practising questions introduced by "متي", followed by a phrase starting with a transitive verb, e.g. "متي تتناول الفطور",
- drills in telling the time between seven and twelve o'clock - but without using fractions of an hour "اتناول الفطور في السابعة صباحاً"; and,
- practices the possessive particle "لـ" with the suffix pronouns "ك", "نا", "ها", "ك", and "كم", e.g.

li	هذه الهدية لي
laha	هذه الهدية لها
lana	هذه الهدية لنا
lakum	هذه الهدية لكم
laka	هذه الهدية لك
laki	هذه الهدية لك

## **- The Third Unit**

The following points are dealt with in this unit:-

- the use of the imperative with the "يا" (ya') of the second

person singular feminine;

- further exercises in using the pronouns;
- further drills using the preposition " على ";
- use of sentences beginning with prepositional phrases, e.g.  
" في المطبخ ثلاجه " and,
- revision of compound interrogatives " الى أين " , " من أين " and  
" أين " .

#### **- The Fourth Unit**

This unit provides:-

- more exercises in the use of the suffix pronouns which  
accompany the imperfect;
- further drills in conjugating verbs;
- practising the use of " بعد " ; and,
- forming definite adjectives.

#### **- The Fifth Unit**

The following topics are introduced in this unit:-

- the use of the verb " يَفْضَلُ " with the first and second persons singular;
- the use of prepositional verbs " يَحْتَاجُ إِلَى ";
- the use of relative adjectives e.g.  
" مَسْطَرَّةٌ خَشَبِيَّةٌ " ; " ; " ألْوَانٌ مَائِيَّةٌ "
- the use of colour terms, and,
- familiarising the learner with the Islamic and Christian calendars.

#### **- The Sixth Unit**

This is the last unit in the first volume of Arabic for Beginners. This unit is in the form of a story about a typical family. This story brings together a variety of structures which it often uses in one and the same sentence. This approach may not be conducive to effective revision, particularly in the case of weak learners.

#### **4.3.6 REMARKS ON THE STRUCTURES OF THE BOOK**

Having analysed and reviewed the contents of the book, we may



formulate a number of critical remarks, namely:-

1. It is noticed that the book does not account adequately for the different types of pattern and structure. While some patterns have been introduced in a very condensed and boring manner, others have been casually dealt with in the same unit. In this context, the reader may be referred to the Fourth Unit of Part 1 of this volume where, according to the principal aim of the lesson which pertains to this unit, the preposition "إلى" ('ilā) was supposed to be introduced. However, on investigating the items in the unit in question, we find that this preposition has occurred twice only whereas the preposition "في" (fi), which has been fully accounted for in the preceding unit, is used a few times in spite of the fact that its introduction is neither justified, nor covered by the principal aims of the lesson. Pedagogically speaking there is no objection against the reintroduction in a certain lesson of previously encountered topics, but any such attempt should not be at the expense of the materials and topics of the new lesson which must receive primary attention. In fact, the preposition "في" (fi), in particular, has been used most extensively in the Fourth Unit of Part 3 of the book.

2. It is clear from Part 2 onwards that the book completely ignores the points which have been encountered in the Oral stage. This lack of continuity is a serious weakness in the book. It also occurs in a different part of the book, namely in the presentation of verbs where the verbs introduced in the oral stage are completely ignored in the latter stages.
3. The book lacks a well-conceived plan for the introduction of syntactic points. For instance, the book could have introduced the pronouns, the interrogative particles, the demonstrative pronouns and the masculine and feminine in that order. However, though the book occasionally accounts for phenomena of the foregoing nature in a single lesson, many of them are reintroduced in various parts of the book in an utterly disorganised manner.
4. The distribution of verbs over the units of the book is not satisfactory. While certain units are full of verbs, others have very few. For example, while the first unit of the book contains two verbs only, the second unit includes one single verb, and the third unit has five verbs, i.e. " يدخل ", " يقرأ ", " يسأل ", " يقول " and " يصلى ", it should be remarked, that such verbs are given in the imperfect form only. The book concentrates on the verbs in

spite of their morphological complexity in comparison with the nouns, and certainly, the particles. This perhaps explains why certain TAFL text-books start with the noun and the particles leaving the morphologically complex words until last. However, because of the concentration of the book under consideration here on the verb, it adopts the procedure of presenting it piece-meal, a factor which creates some confusion. This lack of an explicit overall view of the structure of the book exacerbates this confusion, severely denting its pedagogic usefulness.

#### **4.3.7 THE EXERCISES IN ARABIC FOR BEGINNERS**

The exercises in Arabic for Beginners appear in different forms. The main objective of the exercises is to offer the learner the opportunity to practise the basic grammatical features of Arabic syntax correctly and spontaneously. Among the numerous types of exercise in the book, one may specifically refer to the following:-

Transformation

Substitution

(a) in one place

(b) in two places

(c) in three places

Answering questions by utilising pictures.

Forming questions.

Putting a word in its correct form.

Although it is nowhere explicitly stated, the exercises in the book are designed to serve the following objectives.

1. Certain drills are of a formal and mechanical nature, giving the teacher complete control over the learner's responses. Typically, these drills have one correct response only. The learner merely repeats the sentences in the drills for the sake of acquiring a formal, automatic skill. The "Transformation" and "Substitution" exercises may be cited as belonging to this category. Of the former type of exercise, one may quote the following examples:-

- (a) " هو تلميذ " = " عبدالله تلميذ "
- (b) " هو اندنوسي " = " باسم اندنوسي "
- (c) " هو باگستانی " = " احمد باگستانی " , etc

2. The book contains comprehension drills. The primary objective of these drills is to help the learner use the language in a communicatively meaningful manner. Drills of this type presuppose a

thorough knowledge of the various linguistic dimensions of the text upon which they are based, be they grammatical, semantic or discourse oriented. Among the types of comprehension exercises which the book utilises are the following:-

1. True or false
2. Answering questions on the text
3. Filling the gaps
4. Connecting two sentences
5. Rearranging words to form meaningful sentences
6. Rewriting sentences after the introduction of additional words.

The exercises seem to be graded in terms of difficulty. Thus mechanical drills precede comprehension drills and these in turn precede production exercises which allow the learner to use the language with some creativity, e.g. writing a short story. This explicit plan is of course based on sound pedagogical principles.

Generally speaking, the instructions to the exercises are clear and straightforward, although they sometimes contain vocabulary items that are not in the learner's dictionary. This is a common mistake in TAFL books, a factor which when it occurs, renders the learner's task of fully understanding the exercises difficult to perform. An exercise like,

" اجعل الكلمات التي بين القوسين في الصيغة الصحيحة لها " will pose

difficulty to a learner who is unfamiliar with the meaning of the word "الصيغه", or the word "القوسين", with the consequence that he will not be able to do the exercise. The instructions are sometimes too long and far too complex for the learner to be able to understand them properly. To overcome this difficulty some educationalists suggest stating the instructions in the learner's mother tongue. However, this could be difficult if the learners speak different mother languages, as is the case with the students who join the Arabic Language Institute in Saudi Arabia. Typically the learners in a class have different native languages. Instructions like:-

"ضع خطأً تحت كل كلمه مماثله كما في المثالين التاليين "

or, "اجب عن الأسئلة مستعيناً بالكلمات التي بين القوسين مع تغيير مايلزم "

are grammatically and lexically complex for beginners. In my view, the teacher must intervene under such circumstances and explain to the learners the requirements of those instructions, as otherwise the exercises in the book will not be comprehensible to the learner.

Arabic for Beginners strikes a good balance between the formal and the communicative types of exercise, the aim of the latter being to help the learner use the language spontaneously inside and outside the Institute. To achieve the latter aim the book utilises the dialogue method effectively to help simulate real-life situations which contextualise the linguistic material involved and enhance the learners' ability to use that material in a

common and more meaningful way.

## **THE DIALOGUES**

Arabic for Beginners is used in the Arabic Language Institute to teach adult learners whose ages range from eighteen to forty. This being the case, the choice of dialogues becomes of utmost significance as they are expected to cater for the specific needs of those mature learners. If we examine the quality of some dialogues in the book from this perspective, we discover that they are characterised by artificiality. A dialogue of this nature is being deliberately designed to serve specific educational aims. If this were to be considered a virtue, it should not be at the expense of ignoring the characteristics and considerations which should be fulfilled in a good dialogue. Writers of text-books for mature learners must ensure that the topics of the dialogues address the learners' communicative needs and their mental and emotional development. Furthermore, each dialogue should constitute a coherent whole. This latter factor is not however, always adhered to, as the following dialogue shows:-

( Dialogue 1 )

شد الخبل

صديق و کمال : باکستاني او اندنوسي ؟

حسان : انا باکستاني

کمال : تعال هنا يا حسان

صديق و کمال : باکستاني او اندنوسي ؟

زکريا : انا اندنوسي

کمال : اذهب هناك يا زکريا

صديق و کمال : شد شد هيا هيا

( Dialogue 2 )

تلميذ جديد

المدرس : ما اسمك ؟

احمد : اسمي أحمد

المدرس : ما جنسيتك ؟

أحمد : انا غاني

حسان : هو غاني يا استاذ



المدرس : اسكت انت أنا أسأل أحمد

These dialogues , are not all well-formed from the discourse point of view. In dialogue 2 for example. Hassan's intention seems to be totally out of place. It seems that Hassan intervenes in this dialogue to give the teacher the opportunity to use the imperative. In addition, these dialogues are characterised by artificiality. The topic of dialogue 1, being the tug-of-war game, can hardly be said to be culturally suitable. Dialogues of this nature should be avoided, particularly as the learners may use them outside their contexts in a communicatively awkward way.

Finally, it is worth commenting that some reading texts used in the book are introduced in an unsatisfactory manner. The following text may be used to exemplify this point:-

#### ( المراكب )

عند عادل مركب وعند رمضان وعند ربيع مركب  
مركب عادل أحمر - مركب رمضان أصفر ومركب ربيع أخضر  
مركب عادل يمشي في الماء ومركب رمضان يمشي في الماء ومركب ربيع يمشي في  
الماء  
مركب رمضان يكسب

عادل يرسم المركب الأحمر ورمضان يرسم المركب الأصفر وربيع يرسم المركب  
الأخضر

This text is characterised by artificiality and it lacks the elements of interest and excitement. It is boring and unsuitable for mature learners who have come to the Arab World to learn Arabic. Its aim is not at all clear.

#### **4.4 ANALYTICAL STUDY OF CULTURE IN THE TEXT BOOK**

##### **ARABIC FOR BEGINNERS**

##### **4.4.1 Introduction**

Teaching culture is one of the central aspects of teaching foreign languages, for culture is, after all, the way of life of a certain people. Therefore, the cultural component of a language must be given its place in any text-book designed to teach the language to foreigners. Consequently, any serious text-book designed to teach Arabic as a foreign language must have as one of its basic premises the fact that Arabic and Islamic culture may very well be one of the main aims of the students of the language. Even if it is not the main aim, it surely is essential to their understanding of the

language that they understand its correct use. This is achieved when the student knows that he successfully understands and can communicate the cultural component of the sentences he uses.

The book in our hands does not neglect Arabic and Islamic culture. In fact one of its main objectives is that Arabic and Islamic culture must be presented to the foreign student as clearly and correctly as possible.

It must be made clear at the outset that the authors of the present series had in their minds the intention that Arabic and Islamic culture should be presented throughout the whole series and not in just one volume. And since our aim in this chapter is to assess their presentation of culture, it would not be enough to confine our assessment to the first volume alone, as is the case regarding the other aspects (i.e. sound, vocabulary and constructions). In many cases, concentrating on the first volume gives us a representative picture of the approach that the authors adopted in their work and how successful they were in doing so. But, if we as reviewers adopted this approach and examined only the first volume, we would not have derived an accurate description of instruction in cultural aspects because many instructors do not include serious cultural instruction in the early part of their course. This is the reason why we have to assess the cultural content as presented throughout the entire series.

#### **4.4.2 The First Book**

This text is the first book in which the foreign student is introduced to the culture of the people who speak the language which he is learning. The first impression one gets from the book is that it takes into account the issues of culture in general and Arabic and Islamic culture in particular. A closer look reveals that the book presents material that has cultural components of two kinds, i.e., the universal culture and the particular culture. The universal culture is that which is similar or identical to the rest of the world's major cultures. The particular culture is that part of the culture which is unique and distinct from the rest of the world's cultures.

The book in question concentrates on the universal aspect of culture which is desirable since it appeals to what is familiar in the student's own culture which is no doubt helpful from a psychological and educational perspective. The view presented is one which shows Arab and Islamic culture as fitting in amongst all the world's other cultures.

If we look at the cultural content of this book in detail we will find that this method is helpful and that it almost entirely concentrates on universal culture by using vocabulary, constructions and expressions which do not reflect features unique to Arab and Islamic culture. A rough list of

the topics dealt with in the book are:-

1. General cultural topics like:- 'Football', 'Who is absent?', and 'Let's draw'.
2. Topics that include greetings and nationalities.
3. Topics about school. This category includes material about schools in general (i.e. the library, the laboratory etc.).
4. School activities are the subject of numerous lessons. For example:- school games, trips, and outdoor camps.
5. Topics which cover family life, homes, and shopping areas. Some of the subjects in this category are:- Visiting my family, A gift, Abdel-Azzez's family, The sitting room, Hishaam goes to the market, The uncle, The aunt, etc.

It is evident from this list of topics that they are very general, in the sense that they talk about things which are not unique to Arab and Islamic culture. On the other hand, they are not totally empty of Arab cultural content. To make this point clearer, it is important to note that although the general topics are universal as has been pointed out, they vary widely from culture to culture as to how these things are practised. For example, general behaviour, the way in which people sit and eat their food, how they greet each other when they meet etc, all vary considerably from culture to culture. So, although the first book concentrated on general

topics, it painted a pretty accurate picture of the way general topics are practised in Arab and Islamic culture.

Moreover, the authors managed to include few purely Islamic topics in the book. There are only two topics in the third and fifth sections of the book. One is "The Mosque", the second is "Friday Prayers".

The first topic is about al-wudoo' "الوضوء" and Prayers in the Mosque. This topic is accompanied by a number of pictures which feature a person wearing an Arab costume and doing wudoo' and getting ready for Prayers. This is particularly useful from the point of view of teaching culture, since pictures help students understand better than using words.

In the second topic, there is a description of how a student spends his weekend. Within this description, there is a discussion about Friday prayers which are the main Prayers for Moslems. The book states that the student wakes up early and goes to Prayers in the town's grand Mosque. it also tells more about what happens during this day. The dialogue is accompanied by relevant pictures.

The book only very rarely discusses other cultures. The reason for this may be that students at this early stage are not able to read properly, something which obviously affects their ability to comprehend what is being taught.

One of the good things about the book is that when a new subject is

presented, it is started by first asking some questions which help to motivate the student and get him prepared for the new subject. For example, when a subject like football or tug of war is presented, students are first asked, by way of introduction, about which game they play, or they are asked to tell what their favourite sports are.

In presenting the different cultural aspects of the various Arab and Muslim societies the book illustrates scenes from the old and contemporary life of Arabic countries. However, it must be noted that the dominant part is teaching students about contemporary life. I believe that this is a natural thing to expect the authors to do. This is due to the simple reason that at this early stage of the course, students are assumed to be beginners in terms of their knowledge of the language and that they have just arrived at the place where the course is being taught to them. Therefore, the best thing to do is to tell them more about the new environment they are living in while they are doing the course. On one hand, this makes life easier for them, and on the other it does not require them to imagine things that are not in their vicinity, which would be an extra burden on them. In later stages, it will be easier to describe to students more aspects of Arab and Islamic culture: past, present and future.

Generally speaking, the first book of the series covers major cultural subjects related to what students are expected to be interested in.

This cultural content is presented in thirty dialogue texts and eight reading texts. These include one hundred and ten principal constructions, and four hundred and forty five words and expressions. Here are some general remarks about the book:-

1. The authors failed to mention or make use of some of the essential things which help students understand the country and culture in which they are living. For example, they could have introduced a map of Saudi Arabia which would be an easy way of introducing students to the geography of the country and its many important places and cities. With a map, there would be no need to use many words since maps speak for themselves. Another limitation of the book is the fact that there is no mention of the Saudi currency which is vital for students to understand both for cultural and practical reasons. It is also desirable to mention other national currencies and present the flags of other Arab countries, but not as necessary as it is in the case of the country where the course is being taught.
2. The book introduced subjects " A trip " as a subject where there could have been a chance to give an idea about some places in the country. In this particular subject it was possible to mention one place or another where people would go and spend time. Similar remarks apply to the



subject of a "game".

3. No mention is made of anything regarding the Arab and Muslim world generally, or of customs, feasts and occasions either past or present. This is not necessarily a criticism of the book, for it may very well be the authors' deliberate intention. After all, at this early stage their aim is to introduce general cultural topics, without going into details about Arab and Muslim culture.

All in all, the first book of the series is relatively balanced regarding cultural content. However, the value of the book would be greatly increased if the minor criticisms mentioned above were remedied.

#### **4.4.3 The Second Book**

The second book of the series contains fifty dialogue chapters of which twenty-five are reading lessons. The book includes sixty-nine constructions and four hundred and ten words and expressions. One's first impression of the book is that it is a continuation of the first text, for it contains lessons that are related to the ones that appeared in the first book. The difference is in the way the material is presented. In the first book, there are more universal cultural topics than ones peculiar to the Arab and Islamic world, while the emphasis is almost reversed in the second text.

The share of the Arab and Islamic subjects is increased while the share of the universal cultural topics is decreased.

To explain this more fully it is useful to list some of the subjects that are discussed concerning Islamic and Arab issues. These include the following:-

1. In the Mosque.
2. During Ramadan
3. In Mecca.
4. The Feast.
5. Al- Umra
6. Al- Higma

To compare the last list of cultural Islamic and Arab topics, let us look at the list of some of the general cultural topics one would find in the second book which are similar to the topics dealt with in the first book. These subjects include:-

1. At home.
2. In the park.
3. The house.
4. In the library.
5. Going to school.
6. Hobbies.

7. Food.
8. The Holidays.
9. My mother.
10. The family.
11. In the shopping area.
12. Accident.
14. Work.

The second book still introduces subjects that do not reflect cultural features peculiar to Arabs and Muslims. It has also been noted that the second book covers many of the subjects that have been discussed in the first book. "The family", "In the library". I believe that this is a good direction for the authors for the simple reason that the first book concentrates on teaching the language rather than the culture, and gives it first priority.

But in the second book, where the standard of the students is expected to be higher, the repetition of material taught before is desirable. Further, it is not a complete repetition of the material previously discussed but rather subjects are introduced more clearly and in more detail which is relative to the higher level of language capabilities that the students must have reached.

It should be noted that the cultural material is presented in the

form of dialogues, reading lessons and stories. Therefore, the same subject of cultural content is presented in these different forms, and this makes it easy for the student to understand the material. To illustrate, if some material is taught in the form of a dialogue, it is presented again in the form of a story or a reading lesson. Here are two examples to show the significance of this:-

This is a dialogue which has the title "In the classroom", it says:-

المدرس : السلام عليكم - لماذا غبت أسس يا علي؟  
علي : ذهبت إلى المستشفى لأن والدي مريض .  
المدرس : لماذا غبت يا أحمد ؟  
أحمد : ذهبت إلى المطار لأن والدي مسافر .  
المدرس : انتما متأخران - قابلني بعد الحصة يا علي وانت كذلك يا أحمد .

The same material was presented in a different form as a story that occurs in a classroom. It says:-

اخرج المدرس كراسة الغائبين وسأل التلاميذ هل هناك تلميذ غائب ؟  
اجاب التلاميذ - نعم هناك تلاميذ غائبون .  
قال المدرس من الغائبون ؟  
قال التلاميذ الغائبون هم أحمد وعادل وحسين - أحمد ذهب الى المحطه  
ليستقبل والده وعادل ذهب الى المستشفى ليزور صديقه وحسين ذهب الى  
المطار ليودع خاله .

كتب المدرس اسماء الغائبين في الكراسه ثم قال يا محمد امسح السبوره  
عندنا اليوم درس جديد.

This is a representative example of the way cultural material is presented in different forms. On the first occasion it is presented as a dialogue and later in story form. I believe that this is a positive feature of the second book of the series. It should also be noted that these subjects are presented in conjunction with vocabulary, constructions and other linguistic structures. Culture is not taught independently of the other aspects of language, nor is it given a special time in each class as is done by some text-books.

That was by way of presentation, and now the content. In the second book very little is taught about the modern culture of Arabic speaking countries. A few Arab cities are mentioned, but these are not given a prominent place, and no mention is made of Arab currencies, flags, or other cultural symbols.

From time to time, students are asked to write letters to their friends describing their countries and giving their impressions about their adopted cultures. This has good psychological benefits for the students since they feel happy to tell everybody about their countries and hear about other places and cultures. All this should be done in Arabic. The only

remark about this technique is that it should be used more often.

In conclusion, we have to say that this book is not very different from the first regarding the treatment of cultural content. It emphasises general concepts that do not reflect the true characteristics of Arabic culture. Among the few chapters where specific cultural subjects are discussed, Islamic subjects enjoy more attention than other aspects of Arab culture. It would have been expected for the book to cover some aspects of modern cultural developments in Arab countries. We shall see whether the authors make amends for this in the third book of the series.

#### **4.4.4 The Third Book**

In the third book of the series the authors have assumed that the students have gained sufficient knowledge of Arabic to be able to understand a fuller cultural lesson. They now talk about more subjects, using the vocabulary that students are expected to have mastered in order to tell them more about the Arab culture. The subjects in the third book consist of the following:-

#### **- Arab and Islamic Culture**

It is quickly apparent that the authors emphasise subjects that pertain to Islamic culture over those of Arabic culture. These include the following:-

- **Subjects which cover important occasions of Islamic nature**

These might be called socio-religious subjects. For example, the authors introduce subjects which discuss "Ramadan", "Id al-Fitr", "Pilgrimage", "Eid al-Adha" and similar topics.

The authors introduce these subjects gradually. For example, the chapter which discusses "Ramadan", comes before the chapter which covers "Id al-Fitr", similarly, the lesson covering "Pilgrimage" is placed before "Eid Al-adha". It should also be noted that there is an attempt to tell students about the social practices and customs that accompany these occasions.

Regarding the presentation of this material, it is noted that the third book employs the same techniques as those in the previous books. For example, the same lesson would be presented in the form of a dialogue and then in the form of a reading text. Cultural facts may also be introduced within the drills. For example, students may be asked to send someone they know a card at the Id time. Some may be asked to write a piece about Ramadan or Eid al-Adha.

### **- Famous places in the Arab and Islamic world**

The book also covers the general subject of Islamic culture in another way. It gives the student information about famous places in the Arab and Islamic world. The following are some of the famous places covered in the third book:-

- (a) The book provides useful information about Riyadh, the Capital of the Saudi Kingdom. It also presents famous cities and places of religious and cultural significance in the Kingdom (e.g., Al-Ta'if, Jeddah and Mecca).
- (b) Cairo is the subject of one lesson in which the book discusses the Nile, Salah al-Din Citadel and the various Egyptian monuments such as the pyramids. It also gives a glimpse of life in the culturally traditional areas of Cairo.
- (c) The book presents some of the more famous Mosques throughout the Muslim world such as the Al-aqsa Mosque, Al-Jami Al-Umawi in Damascus and Al-Jami Al-Azhar in Cairo.

### **- Famous Muslims**

The stories of famous Muslims who played important roles in Islamic history are briefly told. The stories include:-

- (a) Salah al-Din and the restoration of Bayt Almaqdis.



(b) Khalid Ibn Al-Walid and his fight against the unbelievers of Mecca, and then his fight against the Greeks in al-Sham.

Although these subjects are very important aspects of the Islamic culture, there is a number of limitations about the way they are presented. One is that the authors should have stressed the lessons that should be learned from these stories, namely to show how Muslims fought for their survival and not to impose their ideals on other peoples. The image of Muslims as presented by a book of this sort has to be carefully done. The picture presented by these lessons of Muslims is poor and leaves a negative impression with those non-Muslims who read it.

#### **- Aspects of Contemporary Social Life**

In addition to the subjects that cover Islamic issues, the book introduces subjects of a contemporary social nature. These subjects include Houses, Shopping Areas and School life.

In one lesson, the subject takes the form of a game. One student asks about the longest river in the world, and the most populous Muslim country, etc. In another, there are cross-words through which some useful information is imparted.

As has been stressed throughout this report the presentation style is a very important factor when teaching culture, for it helps attract the

attention of students and gets them interested in the material which is being taught to them. In the book there are many examples of new and stimulating forms of presentation. These include, " Ask and find " **هل قضيت اجازة سعيدة** , " Have you had a nice holiday " , **إسأل وابحث** etc.

### **- Discussions**

As students' linguistic abilities improve, they will reach a point when it is proper to encourage them to engage in discussions about one subject or another, and even try to express their opinions about them in Arabic.

It is certainly good that at this stage the students are being encouraged to practise speaking in Arabic. There are numerous examples where students are asked to express their opinions about various things. For example, on one occasion they are asked to express their opinion about the school uniform, their homework and other similar matters.

Although the aim of this technique is to encourage students to express their views, we find that in such situations the cultural differences reflect themselves. The background traditions and customs of students arise when answering questions and conversing. I think that the authors have in mind various linguistic, educational and social benefits that will occur from students applying this method.

It appears from the previous description of the cultural content of the third book that the treatment of Islamic culture is well balanced with the general aims of the series, both culturally and linguistically. In this respect the material is well presented.

There is no gap between the quantity and quality of the cultural material presented in the second and third book. It is well known that if there were a jump from one to the other in either quantity or quality, it would undoubtedly have serious negative effects on the student's ability to make the necessary connections in what he learned in between the first and second book.

The third book is a natural extension of both previous ones, and takes into account a reasonable degree of expansion and variation when presenting the same general subjects. This is a natural process, in accordance with the student's progressive mastery of the language and knowledge of the culture.

Although the book presented a good deal of general cultural material, so far very little has been presented to students about contemporary Arab societies, their customs and traditions. Also very little of the contemporary developments in the region and the people who played crucial roles in the recent history of the Arab nation has been discussed. One would expect to see some of these issues presented in the fourth book.

#### **4.4.5 The Fourth Book**

The fourth book of the series is for students who by now have reached an advanced level of comprehension in vocabulary, constructions and the general structure of the language. At this stage, the load of teaching culture should be considerably increased since we are now dealing with students who have mastered the language skills necessary to understand much and deal with more complicated material.

In this book the first thing one notices is that the general cultural subjects gradually decrease, and that the unique Islamic culture is increasingly introduced either directly or indirectly. The book covers a variety of Islamic subjects which include the following items:-

1. **عمر بن الخطاب** In this subject the authors discuss Umar the great Muslim figure; the story of his becoming a Muslim, his justice and political skills as a Caliph of the Prophet.
2. **خديجة بنت خويلد** the prophet's wife, and her story with him including the sacrifices she made for the cause of Islam.
3. **خالد بن الوليد** and his role in conquering Mecca. They also discuss his wars against the people who refused to pay Zakat to **ابو بكر الصديق**, the first Caliph after the death of the Prophet.

It must be mentioned that this particular lesson was

taught in a less detailed form in the third book, but now it is useful to teach it again in an extended form because students are now much more able to understand the story of such great Muslim leaders.

4. **غزوة بدر الكبرى** In this lesson the famous story the victory that the Muslims achieved at Badr against their enemies, and its significance in the history of Islam is told.
5. **ابو بكر الصديق** was the great Muslim figure who was of the very first people to believe in what the Prophet told the people and this is the reason why he was called **الصديق**. The story of this great Muslim is told in one of the lessons.

It is quite clear that the fourth book concentrates on the famous figures who played leading roles in Islamic history. I think that there is one figure who comes before all these important figures, who should have been discussed. I mean here the Prophet Mohammed who is the Messenger chosen to carry the message of Islam to the whole world.

The story of the Prophet's life is important because of his utmost importance in the history of Islam and also for students as well, because most of them must have been told at some stage something of the great Prophet of Islam.

It should be noted that most of the great scientific and literary

figures in the history of Islam are not mentioned. People who played leading roles in civilisation and the history of humanity in general.

In addition to the above mentioned topics the fourth book talks about other Islamic themes. For example:-

1. A Muslim Family :- In this lesson the book discusses the family who suffered for their holding on to their faith in the early history of Islam. It is the family of Ammar Ibn Yasir who, with his family suffered intolerable pain from the enemies of Islam.
2. Women In Islam: this is a very important subject that concerns the image of Islam as portrayed by its enemies, and the authors are right to present the subject from the Muslim point of view. In this lesson the book discusses the Prophet's wives and the position of women before and after Islam. This comparison shows how the position of women was very much improved because of Islam.

From the previous discussion it is clear that the fourth book concentrates on great figures in Islamic history. Therefore we can easily see the difference between this book and the previous one in presenting the general subject of Islamic culture. The difference is that there is much more concentration on Islamic subjects in the fourth book than in the third. It would have been better if the authors had chosen to introduce some of

this material in the third book. This would have been in the interests of balance of presentation of the material concerned.

Now if we look at the other material presented we find that there are various subjects introduced as stories which have a clear moral message. This in the end does not go very far from the general cultural aim of the book, since they reflect the Arab and Muslim culture's moral values and these are obviously an important component of any culture. The following are some of these stories:-

1. The Fair Judge
2. Sinnimar's Predicament
3. The Intelligent Student
4. The Wise Ruler
5. The Shepherd, The Wolf, and the Villagers

Such subjects are presented to students in order to help them see those moral values like honesty, fairness and truth which are held to be of utmost importance in the Arab and Islamic culture. Although the texts of the above mentioned stories are written in such a way that certain linguistic aspects are emphasized in order to teach students certain new linguistic skills, the content of these stories is obviously very important.

The cultural and moral content of the stories is deliberately meant to reflect those values held in the culture of Arabs and Muslims.

The general cultural content in the fourth book is presented in the form of things which concern the student in his daily life (i.e., things which he encounters in his normal life either inside school or outside). Some of these subjects are:-

1. The weather
2. At the Clinic
3. A trip to the sea-shore etc.

If we look at the cultural material in order to see what is told about Arabic speaking countries we find some topics which discuss Arab cities like Riyadh, Mecca, Cairo, Alexandria, Basra and Jerusalem.

Also many Arab names are spread throughout the book, which is a positive point; for it is assumed that such books should not be confined to certain sorts of cultural content which covers only a certain period. What is needed is to present students with a balanced cultural picture about the people who speak the language taught.

Although the authors try to achieve that, it is not enough. For they do not draw a clear picture of social life in the Arabic speaking countries.

The book does give some useful and detailed information



accompanied by relevant pictures about the following topics:-

1. The Holy Mosque of Mecca
2. Al-Zaytana Mosque
3. Al-Qurawiygin Mosque
4. Al-Masjid al-Nabawi al-Sharif
5. Taj Mahal

It would have been useful if the authors had given enough information about these famous places, which would have been helpful when combined with the other information about the Islamic aspect of culture.

Generally speaking, it can be said that the fourth book introduced the Islamic aspect of culture in a well balanced manner, devoting sufficient attention to the subject. However, it has to be admitted that other aspects of general Arab and Islamic culture are not given enough attention. Very little is said about the cultures of Arabic speaking nations. Very little is given about the latest development in the area, and the cultural achievements of the people who speak the language.

In brief, the cultural content of the fourth book is dominated by the historical aspect of Islamic culture, while the contemporary Muslim life in various countries is largely neglected. One would expect to see something in the fifth book to fill this serious gap.

#### **4.4.6 The Fifth Book**

A first look at the fifth book in the series Arabic for Beginners shows that, in contrast with the other books in the series, it does not make great use of illustrations. The previous books used pictures to convey and clarify information. It is a natural development to start giving students longer texts without help from pictures. In the early stages students would be in need of pictures since the amount of vocabulary they possess is still not enough to let students read without their help.

We find that in the fifth book the authors have lessons that have been written by well known Arab writers. There are also instructions to guide students in using dictionaries for themselves.

There is also a particular emphasis on reading lessons. Therefore, there are two sorts of reading introduced: the first is what may be called intensive reading, and the other is called extended reading. The first sort occupies the first five units, while the latter takes up the sixth unit in the book.

1. Intensive Reading:- This means that we introduce one subject which is studied in great detail in each lesson. This sort of reading concentrates on certain aspects of the Islamic culture in each lesson so that students will be given some concentrated information about a very important topic. These

topics have been carefully chosen, in the sense that the authors target essential subjects in Islamic culture and contemporary life of Arab countries. Also, famous Muslim figures have been chosen where information is given on their lives and achievements.

2. Extended Reading:- this sort of reading means that students study long texts like a short story or a play, usually at home. When they come to class they are expected to tell what the main idea of the story or the novel is. This means that students are not asked to understand the whole text in great detail.

The general aim of this sort of reading is to encourage students to go and read by themselves any text written in Arabic. This enables them to read some of the fine literary works and get to know the Arab culture on their own. That is why lessons taught in the extended reading style are carefully chosen from the works of respected and famous writers of Arabic.

We can divide the subjects of interest in the fifth book like this:-

- (a) Islamic culture: In this regard, information is given in detail to students which helps them understand the ideas and values which are important in the culture of the language they are learning. This undoubtedly puts them in a better position in their relations with the people who do speak that language.

Some of the subjects which fall in this category are:-

Islamic feasts

Writing the Tradition (Sunna)

Human Rights in Islam

- (b) Cultural Achievements: In the subjects grouped in this category, the authors discuss certain cultural achievements made by Arabic speaking people, both in the past and present.

These are some of the subjects:-

The History of Schools and Scientific Institutions

Islamic Civilisation in Spain

Mosques of Islam

- (c) Famous Muslim Figures: As in the previous books of the series prominent figures in Islamic history are discussed, which is one of the more effective methods of teaching culture and emphasising aspects of it by giving examples of people who embody such values and ideals. These subjects include the following:-

- سعيد بن عمير
- إياس القاضي
- عمرو بن العاص
- سعد بن أبي وقاص

## الامام الشافعي -

Such lessons are introduced in the form of stories, the aim of which is to reflect certain cultural, moral and traditional aspects of Arabic speaking peoples.

In addition, there are lessons where the emphasis is on certain aspects relevant to the student's social life either in or outside school. The following are a some of these:-

1. Take full comfort of your life:- In this lesson the idea is for students to give advice about the best ways to succeed in life.
2. School exams are a world problem:- In this lesson the book discusses the subject of school exams. It tells of problems that face students everywhere in the world, for this problem is universal.
3. Ten Commandments in Life.
4. School and its role towards youth.

These and other similar subjects are presented in order to give students general information about the culture of the people who speak the language. There is a special emphasis on the moral aspect of the culture, for it is important for students coming from a very different culture to know about the moral values held by Arabic speaking people.

It was mentioned earlier that in the fifth book there are lessons

written by famous and well established writers. These were used for a variety of reasons both in terms of the language and culture. They were carefully chosen from some of the best writers to show what proper written Arabic looks like. Also, the lessons were selected to illustrate cultural values. Some of these are:-

1. توفيق الحكيم by ابليس ينتصر.
2. فاضل السباعي by الحبل القصير.
3. محمود تيمور by العيد له الضحية.
4. حسين مؤنس by اغفر لي يارب.
5. علي احمد باكثير by حارس البستان which is a play written by .

#### **4.4.7 General Remarks**

We find that the fifth book is different from the previous ones in some respects. We see that there are more lessons which emphasise Islamic themes, presented in both intensive and extensive reading styles.

We also notice that the authors feature some of the best Arabic literature written by well known Arab authors. It is quite clear that the emphasis has been on Islamic subjects, consequently there was not enough space left to discuss present day Arabic speakers and their role and place in the world. Also very little is made of the achievements of the people who speak Arabic and who are Muslims as well.

Even when the emphasis is on the Islamic theme, one notices that the examples used are not particularly balanced. What we find is that when the emphasis is on the Islamic theme the historical aspect of the religion is emphasised, and no interest is shown in the subject itself. In general, one can say that the book neglects many of the best aspects of the Arab and Muslim culture which should be presented.

#### **4.4.8 The Sixth Book**

This is the last book in the series Arabic for Beginners, and it is similar to the fifth book in that its emphasis is on the two kinds of reading, the extended and intensive. In this book a variety of cultural subjects are presented which include the following:-

##### **1. Islamic Culture**

This is, as usual in the series, the dominant general subject. We find in this category the following:-

- (a) The Quran and how it was compiled.
- (b) Environmental health in Islam.
- (c) Social fundamentals in Islam
- (d) Bravery in Islam.
- (e) Muslim figures: under this sub-category a great number of Muslim

figures are introduced, for example:-

- ابن سينا
- مصعب بن عمير
- مالك بن انس
- عمير بن سعد
- الجاحظ
- شريح القاضي

## **2. Women**

There are a number of lessons in the sixth book devoted to the subject of women. This subject is particularly important because of the need to clarify women's position in Islam and in the Arab culture. Some of the subjects in this category are:-

- (a) Women and how they were treated in Islam
- (b) Mother's love

## **3. Achievements of the Islamic Culture**

- (a) الاندلس
- (b) المسجد الاقصى
- (c) The influence of Islamic civilization on humanity.

The previous subjects were dealt with in the form of intensive



reading. There are other subjects presented in extensive reading lessons.

These are:-

1. في بيت المقدس
2. ربيعة الرأي
3. سلافه
4. خوله بنت الازور
5. The Ring ( الخاتم ) : This is a play centring on an Islamic theme that is composed of six scenes.

In this vein it must be mentioned that in the fifth and sixth books the authors introduce some plays. The objective here is to give students a taste of the Arabic and Islamic literary heritage along with certain moral and cultural values within the play itself.

The book also presents educational subjects which include:-

A letter to my son

My life

Spare time

To conclude, we should include a general remark about the sixth book. It is clear that this book, more than any other one in the series, concentrates on Islamic culture. A careful look at the lessons in the book reveals that this emphasis on the Islamic aspect of the Arab-Muslim culture leads inevitably to a large scale neglect of the other important aspects of

the culture. Therefore, there is no space to present forms of Arab culture or the cultural achievements of the Arabs throughout history up to the present day.

It is also noted that the book clearly dwells on the historical aspects of Islam and its significant figures. This gives the false impression that Islam is something that once was, and which cannot stand up to the contemporary challenges to society.

#### **4.4.9 Final Conclusion**

The series of Arabic for Beginners is intended to be an integrated curriculum to teach Arabic to foreigners. This means that the series should enable the student to acquire enough knowledge of the language and to master all its aspects. From this point of view, one would expect that all the aspects and skills of the language should be well integrated, both in presentation and content.

It is a fact that culture is an important asset in learning a language and understanding its content, in the sense that speaking a language inevitably involves certain cultural conceptions. It is of the utmost importance that the students should be given a fair amount of cultural background in their language instruction in order to enable them to use it spontaneously and correctly. We should always remember that

language often becomes significant when it is presented in social or personal contexts. The reason is that many features of the language depend on social trends, beliefs, values and the interests of the people who speak it.

The six books of the series in question have been considered and analysed in order to discover how the authors made use of the cultural content in the huge space of six books. From the analysis we have come to the following conclusions:-

1. The early books are introductory because they are geared toward students in the early stages of study. Therefore, we find that the dominant theme of the first and the second books regarding culture is that they are concerned with general topics which display features and aspects common to all societies. This is deliberate because the authors do not want to give students a cultural shock by giving them the impression that they are moving miles away from their own culture.

There was, however a small component about Islamic culture which discusses important aspects of Islam like the Mosque and Prayers. This is important because many of the students who usually study such a course are Muslims themselves that come from a foreign country.

As the series progresses, we find that in the third and fourth books the cultural subjects of Islamic and Arab emphasis gradually and noticeably increase. In the fifth and sixth books we find that the Islamic subjects are completely dominant, in terms of the number and of the level of presentation.

2. Arab and Islamic culture is presented in two ways. The first is the direct approach which explicitly states that the lesson is about certain subjects of an Islamic or general cultural theme. There is another indirect way, which is often more effective. This method presents the cultural component in the form of stories or plays which indirectly reflect cultural values.
3. It is clear that the books of the series, especially the early ones, take into account the nationalities of students, for in many of the early dialogues we find that they are taught to ask and answer questions about their nationalities or different cultures. For example, in one lesson, students are asked to write a letter to their relatives in the countries from where they come. In another drill, they are asked certain things about their own background cultures and encouraged to speak in Arabic.
4. It is quite clear in the series that there is a strong tendency to

concentrate on subjects which cover purely Islamic themes, especially some of the great figures in Islam. This, in principle, is expected and an understandable feature of such a series, particularly in the light of the fact that the vast majority of students who do this course are Muslims themselves.

However, this should not come at the expense of the balanced picture in which one expects that an integrated and comprehensive series of books would have enough space to mention other Islamic subjects. The authors failed to give enough attention to important aspects of the Arab culture. This is true regarding the unmistakable modern development of Arabic speaking countries, and also in the general cultural situation of these nations. Some attention was given to these subjects but not nearly enough.

5. It can be said that in the series there was an attempt to give some information about some Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Iraq. These attempts suffered from the problem mentioned above in that there was not enough. Also, the material was mainly about famous historical places, not the peoples and their culture.
6. In most cases, the cultural content is dominated by the

historical aspect of the Arab or Islamic culture. This gives the negative impression of people who have only their past to be proud of, not the present or the future.

7. There was a good tendency toward teaching culture. In many cases, there were two different targets of a lesson: one linguistic and the other cultural. Both these aims are combined in a good presentational technique. A text or a lesson would concentrate on a cultural theme and at the same time grammar and vocabulary is also present.

(a) Said Ibn Amer (subject and predicate)

(b) Abi El-qasim's pair of shoes (object)

(c) the master of the Arabs' pride (denotive of state)

(d) Make your life (verb in the apocopate)

As I mentioned earlier, this is a good feature of the series and it is an improvement on other books which insist that teaching culture must be done in separate books, or at least in special parts of the book. Also, we find that in the drills the authors make sure that they present certain examples which have a cultural message.

8. There is an extensive use of coloured illustrations in the early books, which leave a good impression on students and help them

understand many of the things which would be almost impossible to teach using only words. Gradually, toward the end of the series there is much less dependency on the use of pictures, since it has become easy for students to understand more abstract conceptions in the language they are learning.

9. All the books use modern standard Arabic, and the presentation of cultural content is in modern literary forms. These include short stories and plays by modern writers to give an impression of proper written Arabic. Also, the material is presented in the form of dialogues and reading lessons.
10. It is clear that in certain places the authors correct some of the mistaken conceptions about Arab and Muslim culture which are sometimes in students' minds. This is very helpful and was a good opportunity to do this.

We conclude this discussion by stating that the series, apart from some mistakes that we pointed out earlier, generally succeeds in introducing important aspects of the Arab and Islamic culture. Many of these mistakes could be remedied and by doing so the cultural content of the series would be basically sound and useful both for the student and Arabs' image.

## **CONCLUSION**

Throughout this thesis the main issue has been teaching Arabic as a foreign language through standardised textbooks. Obviously, many factors are important for proper instruction; these include the teacher, student's motivation and more significantly, the textbook. The book is the key because it is the primary resource for material and information in the teaching/learning process.

It has been shown that the standard textbooks currently in use are not wholly adequate to meet this task. Recently, however, there have been efforts by authors aiming to present balanced texts uniting the psychological, linguistic and educational components of instruction.

The material contained in this thesis presents the essential guidelines for use in analysis and evaluation of Arabic textbooks. This material has been carefully arranged so that it can serve as a practical guide for instructors. They will then become aware of the complexities in properly evaluating a particular text and, armed with this knowledge, become able to select the best textbook for their Arabic programme.

In Saudi Arabia, there are several institutions which teach Arabic



as a foreign language. These institutions have published pamphlets and books dealing with this subject. Arabic for Beginners, a series published by the Arabic Language Institute in Riyadh is an exemplary textbook here and will be used as an example to demonstrate the previously mentioned guidelines.

This thesis falls into two distinct sections: the first section is theoretical in nature and focuses on sounds, vocabulary, construction and culture while the second section is more concerned with practical application and stresses the negative and passive forms in Arabic.

Chapter One begins by discussing the importance of speaking and understanding Arabic from many perspectives. This chapter presents the characteristics of the Arabic language and shows their importance in affecting the student either positively or negatively. A student's proper understanding of these characteristics will help in learning Arabic and its many constructions. In addition to the characteristics of Arabic, the morphological, syntactic, phonetic and theoretical features are all matters for consideration. The misunderstanding and poor learning of Arabic which some students experience can often be traced back to a failure to appreciate Arabic's unique identity as expressed in the characteristics mentioned above. Though the scope of this book deals mostly with the practical and

technical aspects of Arabic instruction, its nature and characteristics are also matters that are explored.

It is undeniable that the final outcome of a project depends on its planners' objectives. The planning for Arabic instruction and establishment of a standard textbook will be useless in the absence of clear objectives and syllabus design. In this chapter, light has been thrown on objectives and proper syllabus design for Arabic instruction. The spiritual, national and cultural aspects of Arabic are areas that should be recognised by the course planner and textbook writer. Each skill in the language should be taken into account; therefore, in this Chapter, the skills of Arabic (listening, speaking, reading, writing) are discussed. Since the adaptation of certain syllabus designs for particular teaching methods or textbooks should be shown, there is a section in this chapter which demonstrates model syllabuses created for particular needs (e.g. the grammatical syllabus, the situational syllabus and the notional syllabus). Each particular syllabus has its own philosophy and unique characteristics, yet all of them consider the nature of the society in which the language is taught, the student's perspective and the needs of the language course itself. One quickly notices the gradation of subjects and the various drills contained in the different syllabuses.

In addition, this chapter presents the reasons why students decide to study Arabic. These include: geographical, economic and religious motivations. It shows that Arab governments have done their best to provide resources enabling non-natives to learn Arabic. Examples of this include: preparing materials and textbooks, holding conferences and workshops designed to facilitate the improvement of Arabic teaching methods.

Chapter two presented many topics for consideration. Among them, the review of various Arab language institutions which are now in the process of compiling language textbooks for publication certainly merits our attention. This review shows the "state of the art" in language text book publication since there are many new books being written and published. Most of them include sections on language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) and elements (sounds, vocabulary, constructions and culture).

Chapter two also presented a brief description of the Arabic Language Institute in Saudi Arabia. Its goals, departments, admission requirements, degrees, course of instruction and philosophy are examined.

The second chapter explores the whole Arabic for Beginners I, series of which "Arabic for Beginners" is only one volume. This survey

shows us how the series was planned and executed with particular emphasis on the syllabus. It is shown that there are no gaps between the volumes and that the gradation of subjects in the syllabus is balanced.

Chapter three begins with the theoretical sections of this thesis. It was geared towards demonstrating the importance of correctly teaching sounds, vocabulary, constructions and Arabic culture. The first section of this chapter dealt with the teaching of sounds: how to teach them correctly, the objectives of such instruction, the nature of Arabic sounds and features which affect sounds, like stress and intonation, were all topics covered in this section. In addition to this, the section also threw light on the difficulties and problems many non-natives have in learning Arabic. The section concluded with a passage stressing the importance of teaching sounds as a separate component in a programme of instruction as well as the recognition and discrimination of sounds and the teaching of sounds through meaningful words.

The second section of chapter three is devoted to looking at the vocabulary of the average Arabic textbook, and discussing several theoretical concepts relating to vocabulary usage. An awareness of these concepts enables textbook writers to prepare their works more effectively. Writers should take note that it is more important for students to learn

"concrete" words that have practical meaning than abstract, nebulous words in the early stages of instruction. Words should also be taught in their proper context rather than in isolation. Finally, guidelines as to the importance of selecting the proper vocabulary for instruction are laid down. The frequency, range, availability, coverage and "learnability" are important factors which should be recognised when selecting vocabulary lists for Arabic texts.

The third section in this chapter focuses on constructions (grammar) and traces the evolution of Arabic grammar, highlighting many complexities in the language which often confuse beginners. These complexities have consequently led many Arabic scholars to try and clarify Arabic grammar and simplify its teaching. Because of these efforts, areas of language instruction which need modification that would have gone unrecognised have now been discovered. Some of these include: teaching the language itself rather than teaching about it, teaching grammar functionally and restricting instruction to the basic and practical aspects of Arabic rather than including unnecessary grammar which can lead to student confusion. If we consider the fact that a language is the vessel of culture, we will understand that without a basic comprehension of the linguistic and cultural implications of language, one cannot fully appreciate

the nation's culture.

The final section in this chapter is concerned with the historical background of culture and its impact on language instruction. It advocates the introduction of cultural influences gradually yet systematically, being careful not to inject any hint of bias between the Arab-Islamic culture and the student's own native culture. It also recommends teaching about Arabic culture in an evolutionary manner, that is, starting long ago and progressing to the present day.

This chapter has tried to show the components that make up the theoretical basis of this thesis.

Chapter four in this thesis is concerned with the result of applying the criteria for evaluating textbooks, therefore, these criteria are detailed. The first section in this chapter is an analysis of Arabic sounds and their presentation. Up to this point, the book had not presented such information. This is not to say that references to sounds have not been made. Actually, many of them have been made including passages about the Abstraction of Sounds, their presentation through meaningful words, the quality of drills and exercises and the consideration of the psychological and educational aspects.

Section two of this chapter gave an analysis of the vocabulary used

in this book and addresses this issue from various perspectives. The amount of words that have been discussed in this section is adequate. It is noticeable that there are more "new" words here than "old" words. This is important because this means the authors were aware of the "proportionality" principle; it stresses a higher proportion of new, fresh words in each lesson than already known, old words. This gives the lessons more life and is much more beneficial for students than simply reviewing the same words ad infinitum.

The analysis of the vocabulary in this book shows that consideration was paid to the "concrete" words and the "function" words. There are more concrete than function words, which is natural since the content words are the ones upon which the textbook and its dialogue relies. Students seem to have a much easier time making sense of concrete words than the abstract function words.

A wise textbook writer will realise that many students have problems understanding compound words so, in the early volumes, the writer will carefully avoid any reference to them. An analysis of this book shows that the authors were aware of this and make use of compound words only sparingly. The writers also seldom use synonyms which gives the impression that the authors wanted to avoid placing this extra burden on

their students' shoulders. Though the antonyms would give a significant impact to the early stages of language instruction, the book does not consider them at all. The book also omits any use of dialect or foreign words except those words which have been wholly adopted by Arabic. Taken altogether, this text performs an adequate job of introducing vocabulary. The few disadvantages in the way these words were sometimes used is wholly outweighed by the positive impact which the whole vocabulary section itself makes.

The third section of chapter four is concerned with the outcome of the construction analysis in the text. It must be said that though the publishers tried to present items in a reasonable manner in terms of their numbers and distribution, a number of mistakes were committed which bear a brief review.

1. Items in the oral stage (where the student does not see any written form of the language) should be represented in the second stage (the written section).
2. Some items are heavily used while others are mentioned and then neglected.
3. The nature and the formation of certain dialogues are dull and, more important, grammatically incorrect.



The construction exercises seem to be graded in terms of difficulty. They are clear and straightforward enough to compensate for the unclear original texts.

The fourth section in this chapter is concerned with the impact of culture on instruction. One notices that in the early sections of the book, culture is dealt with in a subtle manner. It seems the publishers did not want to give their readers "culture shock" by exposing them to too much too soon. However, as the series progresses, more Islamic and Arabic themes are gradually introduced. By the fifth and sixth books, the Islamic theme is prevalent throughout. It seems that culture has been introduced both directly and indirectly. It is clear that the books tried to present the language through culture, taking into consideration the fact that a proper and clear understanding of Arabic is inherently linked to a full appreciation of its culture. Apart from a few criticisms (the neglecting of modern Arab culture and heavy emphasis on Islamic themes) one could conclude that the series generally succeeded in introducing important aspects of Arab and Islamic culture.

We should draw attention to the fact that this analysis of the textbook for Arabic instruction considers elements of the book itself such as vocabulary, construction, sounds and culture. With the correction of the

previously mentioned negative points the evaluation above can be adopted as guidelines for evaluating the Arabic textbook.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **USEFUL FEATURES**

In the previous chapters we have discussed the important fundamental principles on which the text-book on "Teaching Arabic as a Foreign Language" to speakers of other languages is based. These principles include sounds, vocabulary, constructions and culture. Although these principles are considered to be the essential features of the text-book there are other important features that play an important role in the shaping of the text-book.

In this appendix many points will be discussed, such as what is meant or intended by the text-book as well as the pedagogical and psychological considerations, the language lab, pictures in the text-book, vocalisation and other factors which have to be taken into account when preparing the text-book.

#### **1. Text-book**

The text-book is considered to be the most important teaching aid

since it is the main source of information to the student and can help teachers reach their objectives. The text-book, when teaching a foreign language is of utmost importance because it transfers a new language and culture to students with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

There are differing views on the definition of a text-book. Some views restrict the definition to the content of the book while others include accompaniments such as the student's work-book, supplementary reading book, teacher's manual, exercise book, pictures and posters and the language lab book etc. work associated with the book. In this respect Al-Qasimi believes that all these teaching materials are interrelated and complement each other (القاسمي 1980:75-6). It is essential, therefore, that the text-book and accompanying aids should be calibrated with corresponding linguistic, cultural, educational and technical aspects. There is no doubt that the teaching aids have their advantages in the educational curriculum, therefore it is useful to know the relationship between such material and the basic text-book and other aids used in teaching the foreign language.

## **2. Students' Work-book**

This book consists of intensive exercises and drills which deal

with the language element and skills. Concentration is usually only on one certain aspect of the language, such as verbal communication, writing or grammar until the student masters this particular aspect of the language. The student's work-book follows the content of the text-book while trying to reinforce learning abilities with supplementary practice and exercises.

### **3. Supplementary Reader**

The supplementary reader book is graded in order of difficulty. This book also follows the structure of the main text-book while aiming to give the student a broader outlook so that general books and newspapers can be studied. Such books are generally at the advanced level and are of particular value in teacher training programmes. طعيمه believes that such books are not suitable for the student less proficient in reading skills especially if cultural aspects of the chosen language are involved (طعيمه 1985:270).

### **4. Conversation Book**

This book also supplements the text-book and is considered to be a major source of learning. The conversation book helps the student to

familiarise himself with the natural pronunciation of the native speakers of the foreign language and contains dialogues similar to those found in the text-book. Teachers of foreign languages attach great importance to these books as communication skills are dependent on this conversation book. As **صيني** 1977 reveals, the art of conversation has many advantages. The book gives a clear understanding of the natural pronunciation and helps the student to practise with confidence. The conversation text-book follows the main, classroom text-book in that the former supports and advances the latter. At the beginners level the conversation pieces are simple, clear and short; at the intermediate level they concentrate on different issues and situations relating to previous exercises, while at the advanced level, the conversations would be of the highest standard. The ultimate aim of these conversation text-books is to aid the student in his attempt to express his opinions on a variety of topics or issues as well as to be able to understand others when they do so in the foreign language.

These, therefore, are some of the teaching aids which are invaluable as supporting materials to the text-book. It must be stressed however that they cannot replace the main text-book which is the fundamental source of information for teachers and students alike.

There is a fear that sub-standard text-books may be published and used in teaching. In fact, on occasion, teaching aids may even replace the inferior text-book. The outcome of such teaching methods would be very unsatisfactory owing to the fact that the student should be able to rely on the text-book at school and at home.

Regarding methods of teaching the Arabic language, it must be stressed that the text-book used by foreign learners must differ from that used by native speakers. Sadly, some Arab governments send the Arabic text-books used in schools in the Middle East to schools in Africa and Asia. The text-book on teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers has different objectives since the users of that book have their own objectives, linguistic and cultural backgrounds, etc. It might be said, in this respect, that Arab native speakers, learning their language at school would not face the culture shock or the cultural adjustment which affect foreign language learning. The Arab student learns his language to acquire correct use of grammar, style and rhetoric in order to be able to differentiate between standard Arabic and its dialects. Mistakes made by native speakers would be different from mistakes made by foreign learners of Arabic, for instance in the field of noun-adjective gender.

In relation to this القاسمي (1980:75-6) mentions that the text-book

for teaching Arabic as a foreign language should depend on a contrastive analysis between the modern standard Arabic M.S.A. and the language of the student, while the text-book for the native speaker depends on a contrastive analysis between standard Arabic and his dialect. It is important to mention that the text-books of this degree of sophistication are scarce and subsequently this affects the progress of the great number of students wishing to learn the Arabic language.

The reasons for the scarcity of the suitable text-book as mentioned by القاسمي, are as follows:-

1. The lack of specialists in the field of modern applied linguistics and teachers of Arabic as a foreign language.
2. The lack of adequate studies regarding teaching materials and aids.
3. The inappropriateness of the books normally used for teaching Arabic as a foreign language whether in their philosophy or in plan.

There are many text-books, however, which lack any explicit, or even implicit, plan in presenting vocabulary, grammar, phonology or cultural aspects. In this connection الناقه (1983:128) remarks that some of the text-books used in teaching Arabic as a foreign language tend to teach classical Arabic, whereas other text-books teach the dialects, both of which are unacceptable. It must be said in this respect that recently



efforts have been made to overcome this problem. Nowadays there are a few good text-books (with the emphasis on a few) which have been formulated in the light of criteria for the construction of foreign language text-books.

The discussion of the scarcity of suitable text-books leads us to try and find a solution to improve the availability of such text-books.

القاسمي (1980:78) proposes the following solutions:-

1. The Arab educational, cultural and scientific organisations should form committees of specialists and experts who have full knowledge of preparing and designing the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.
2. The Islamic organisations could contribute to the creation of suitable text-books by offering educational and training help to people who are interested in teaching Arabic as a foreign language in many Islamic countries provided these people are specialised in applied linguistics, the educational curriculum and the Arabic language.
3. Authorities interested in teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages should offer the same help and encouragement to people whoever they may be, who have the ability to write suitable text-books.

In a conference held in Morocco in 1980 concerning the preparation of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, one of the recommendations was that experts in this field should meet regularly in order to consider the issue of providing and updating suitable text-books. The publication of a journal for teachers of Arabic as a foreign language was also considered.

It is important to mention here that teaching Arabic as a foreign language has been expanded during the last ten years. The establishment of a number of institutes for teaching Arabic to non-Arabic speakers in some Arab countries, such as Saudi Arabia, indicates that there is a need for qualified teachers in this area.

Along with the educational, linguistic and cultural aspects of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, there are other aspects which have to be taken into account. The text-book must take into consideration the learners' interests, needs and abilities in order not to discourage the language learning process. Learning abilities differ from person to person and are also affected by age. The ability of adults differs from that of children. The adult student can, for example, digest more vocabulary, more complex constructions, and more abstract concepts than a child who grasps the concrete object rather than the abstract idea object.

For these reasons therefore, the text-book has to be written with attention paid to these factors.

In fact the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language is usually restricted either to adult learners of Muslim or non-Muslim countries. The reason for this, as mentioned by **طعيمة** and **الناقه**, is that the majority of people who are interested in learning Arabic are adults, regardless of their goals, objectives or motivating factors, or whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims. In relation to this it may be said that the author of the textbook should try to cater for these different and competing demands as much as possible.

If we recognise the fact that the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language is directed especially at the adult student, then we have to consider for example those elements in the language which may cause difficulties for the adult learner - writing from right to left, discriminating between long and short vowels, and realising the connection of letters according to their place in the word and so on - one very important point that has to be considered when preparing the text-book of Arabic for adult students.

The presentation of difficult and infrequent vocabulary in the first lesson contradicts the criteria for successful text-book production.

Presenting vocabulary and constructions before the student can recognise and differentiate between the Arabic sounds leads to erratic learning. Producing a long list of vocabulary in a particular lesson and very little in another is not educationally sound. In teaching Arabic as a foreign language many educationalists believe that sounds should be taught independently in the text-book. Constructions, grammar, vocabulary and concepts should be taught in a logical order. One of the most important points which has to be considered when preparing the text-book is the balance between the presentation of elements and skills. One should not be taught at the expense of the other unless the book aims to achieve a certain goal such as specialised speech or vocabulary.

The readability of the text-book is also an important consideration when preparing the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. By readability we mean clarity, simplicity, style as well as the length of the words and sentences. From the previous discussion, therefore, it appears that educational and psychological factors play an important role in teaching a foreign language and have to be considered when preparing the text-book.

## WRITING AND VOCALISATION

### 1. Writing

Learning how to speak usually comes before learning how to read and write, therefore learning theories call for skilled people to teach the student to listen, speak, read and write successively. Though the writing skill comes last it has the same importance as the others when learning the language. Lado (1957:93) believes that writing is not a language but it is "a way of recording language by means of visible marks". On his part, صيني (1982) claims that writing contains three elements: the transformation of sounds to symbols which he named dictation; writing sounds (letters) in a clear, concise method which he named hand writing and self-expression which he calls composition. Regarding Arabic writing, it must be mentioned that there are written symbols which represent sounds such as [Ka], [ma], [sa] and [da] while there are names for these sounds which are كاف, ميم, سين and دال respectively. When presenting Arabic to non-Arabic speakers it may be wise to teach the Arabic sounds according to their phonetic values. This would avoid confusion between the sounds and the names of the letters which represent them in writing. In fact many teachers and authors of text-books recommend that the teacher takes it

upon himself to teach the symbols of the Arabic sounds such as [na], [wa], [la] and so on. Examination of text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language shows that a number of these books pay no attention to certain points which cause confusion to the student. This may be due to carelessness on the part of the author or the fact that he is fluent in his native language and cannot foresee potential problems which the student may encounter. The following example illustrates the problem which may occur in this connection: suitable methods of presentation. Sounds such as [ع], [q] and [s] could cause confusion to the student because their written symbols take different shapes according to their place within the word.

The previous examples indicate the importance of writing when teaching Arabic as a foreign language. It follows, therefore, that the main task of teachers and text book compilers is to simplify and clarify the rules of writing especially for beginners in the Arabic language. There is no doubt that these rules are hard to learn owing to their complexity. The great majority of native speakers who are familiar with the Arabic language face difficulties when writing the hamza or the alif and so on. Research has shown that some text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language have tried to explain these rules in detail to the student in order to help him write Arabic correctly but, in my opinion, such procedures could lead to

negative learning owing to the complexity of these rules. I believe that judicious and sensible teaching as well as intensive practice would give the student experience in learning the rules of Arabic writing.

## 2. Vocalisation

One objective of learning Arabic as a foreign language is to be able to read written texts in that language as well as to be able to write in the language. Perfecting reading skills leads to improved writing skills since the student can recognise how the language relates to the written form (texts). Methods of reading and writing therefore should be considered fully. An important topic of this chapter is the vocalisation of written texts. In the writing of the Arabic language the short vowels are not usually part of the word. The main core of the Arabic writing system is indeed the consonant. A word like **كتب** has three main consonants but it has simultaneously three short vowels written as diacritics with respect to the consonants. If the vowels appear in different ways the resulting word will have a different meaning. As an example the word **كتب** could indicate different meanings according to the places of the vowels in the word. Whereas the word **كتب** means it has been written or it was written, **كتب**

means he wrote, while **كتب** means books. It is clear therefore that vowels change the meaning of the word according to their place in the word - a procedure known as vocalisation. This term therefore plays a major part in language especially in the case of **إعراب** where the sign at the end of the word could completely change the context of the meaning. Vocalisation in Arabic writing is one of the problems which face educationists and authors of the text-book of Arabic whether the students are Arabs or not.

The question raised now therefore is how to solve the problem of preparing an adequate text-book for foreign learners of Arabic. There are many opinions on this. Some scholars believe that the best solution is to start with unvocalised texts from the beginning of the learning process since Arabic books and newspapers, which the student will encounter are normally unvocalised. This idea actually failed owing to the low level of language achievement among the students. Other scholars believe that the correct method is to vocalise the text-book completely in the early stage and gradually reduce vocalisation. This allows the student to become familiar with the vocalisation in the early stages while being, at the same time, able to deal with unvocalised texts in newspapers, magazines and most other written works in which words are not vocalised. Though these previous ideas are reasonable to some extent, problems concerning



unvocalised texts still exist. Other linguists and text-book authors recommend that whole texts of the written forms of Arabic have to be vocalised. عساكر (1980:113) believes that vocalisation saves time and effort and helps the reader's understanding. ابن سلامة goes further than this by claiming that vocalisation is considered one of the main features of the Arabic language, hence his name for unvocalised text is incomplete text.

There are many advantages in vocalising text-books regardless of the level for which they are prepared. The presentation of vocalised texts to the new student would make the task of learning easier. The student would be able to read the text without thinking about the grammatical structure of the text, thus avoiding the possibility of confusion. This would encourage the student to read fluently. The need for improvement in the writing system of Arabic has been highlighted by mistakes made by educated Arabs when making public speeches in materials broadcast on the radio and television.

## **AUDIO VISUAL METHODS AND THE TEXT-BOOK OF TEACHING ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

### **Language**

It is known that sight and hearing are the most important senses in human learning activities. Learning will be very effective if the text-book has illustrations as well as supplementary material. If the text-book for teaching the language to native speakers uses audio-visual material, the text-book for teaching a foreign language must therefore also have these aids with relevant instructions. Therefore prime consideration should be given to whether these aids should be only in the text-book or supplementary materials for class room use. There is a positive relation between teaching-learning and audio-visual methods, as Mackay (1965:260) states "language may be practised in the contexts of action, of pictures, or of words". Stevick (1982:106) states that text books without illustrations are "words and words about words; that's what your class work can become if you use nothing but a book". Regardless of the chosen method of teaching which underpins the text-book it is important to mention that audio-visual

aids and illustrative material are always a welcome addition. Learning a foreign language without the use of audio-visual techniques is dull and boring since the audio-visual aspect enhances the lesson or text-book. صيني and صديق (1984) reveal that in the absence of language teaching aids learning a language could become like learning a set of rules which have to be repeated and memorized and depending on translation and the theoretical explanation become quite distinct from the real use of the language.

Though audio-visual aids are an important part of the entire teaching system as mentioned before, they are more significant when associated with the direct method, because they serve a variety of purposes in this approach. The direct method will not be effective if the teacher and text-book - compiler ignore the importance of audio-visual aids which help the teacher present the language through real and concrete objects.

Audio-visual aids can be considered as follows:-

1. An audio-visual aid is not a target in itself but a means of helping to achieve successful learning.
2. An audio-visual aid is not restricted to specific achievement levels or ages.
3. It is not used solely for pleasure but can enhance learning methods from both the student's as well as the teacher's point of view.

Concerning the text-book for teaching a foreign language there are certain audio-visual techniques which have a strong link with the text-book itself. These include pictures, language lab, and the tape recorder. Some of these audio-visual materials can be inserted in the book while others must be used in conjunction with the text-book and cannot be used independently in the process of teaching the foreign language.

Concerning the use of audio-visual aids in the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the following two points merit consideration:-

1. Many Arab educationalists and text-book compilers do not pay much attention to audio-visual aids on the assumption that they are not useful when teaching Arabic to foreigners.
2. Some Arab countries have used the best educational technology concerning language teaching but, unfortunately, these items have been improperly used and therefore may be disregarded despite advantages which may have developed as a result of their use when teaching Arabic as a foreign language.

Let us now consider some of the audio-visual aids which can play an important part in teaching Arabic to speakers of other languages.

## 1. Language Laboratory

The language laboratory is a well known set-up which is capable of storing and presenting information to the student. In fact the language laboratory can be considered as the practical side of the contents of the textbook for teaching a foreign language. The language laboratory is widely used in teaching languages since language is a natural process which can be mastered through practice and repetition. It is well known in educational fields that attentive listening leads to more proficient verbal communication. If we consider the importance of teaching the student how to listen, speak, read and write, in that order, then it follows that the language laboratory has the advantage of enabling the student to listen and repeat the recorded lessons according to his ability and linguistic competence, in private, avoiding embarrassment.

The advantages of the language laboratory do not however solve all the problems encountered in studying a foreign language. The disadvantages of learning a language via the language laboratory are mentioned by القاسمي (1979:128). They are that the language laboratory does not give the student the chance to express his ideas freely. Certain instructions have to be followed in order to learn certain vocabulary and construction. If errors

appear in the recorded material the effects would be long lasting from to the intensive repetition of these errors by the student. In addition, the language laboratory teacher cannot help every member of the class all the time. The student therefore could make mistakes in his response to the recorded questions.

One cannot deny the positive correlation between the language laboratory and the text-book for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Repetitive exercises in particular are important because they encourage the student's response to questions and instructions which he would come across in the course of his learning experience. Language laboratory exercises, as القاسمي (1979:134) mentions, have to be an extension of the original materials used in the text book since the language laboratory is the medium of reinforcing the lesson studied in the classroom. Presenting new material for the first time in the language laboratory is not educationally sound. Another point concerning the exercises of the language laboratory is that one particular exercise has to cover only one subject at a time. Prepositions, for example, can be presented alone with intensive repetition followed by comprehensive practice in order to ensure that they are understood and mastered. Gradation in language laboratory exercises is another area to be considered. By gradation we mean the arrangement and

presentation of items in the form of short sentences and clear constructions, moving from simple to complex and from general to specific, considering that each exercise is dependent on the previous ones. This should allow future exercises to be grasped with ease. It is clear that the language laboratory plays an important role in the teaching of a foreign language. However when Arabic is taught as a foreign language, the language laboratory has to be given more serious consideration. This should be made mandatory. Ideally a foreign language programme should include the daily use of short, intensive taped exercises which reinforce the text material and should be adequately prepared by fluent Arabic speaking experts.

## **2. Text-Book Pictures**

One of the most common features of the text-book is the use of pictures. Pictures function as a means of conveying concepts, whether abstract or concrete. Three main types of pictures are usually used in language teaching viz. thematic, mnemonic and semantic. Mackay (1965:245) states that "the thematic pictures are used simply to illustrate a theme or text. Their use in getting meaning across can only be incidental to their function as illustrations. They may give the learner a desire to read

the text in order to understand the significance of the illustrations". Thematic pictures usually illustrate a single theme such as a family leaving for a holiday, or the countryside in winter. They take the form of busy scenes expressing certain themes or situations. Mnemonic pictures are presented in the text-book or by the teacher to remind the student of certain words or sentences. Semantic pictures are those which convey a specific meaning; therefore, care should be taken to avoid ambiguity in producing these (Ibid:146).

Pictures help the teacher save time and effort. They are most useful in the early stages of learning the new language, because they enable the student to understand the exact meaning of an utterance by illustrating certain objects and themes.

Certain requirements have to be met when use of pictures for teaching a foreign language. In this respect صديق (1986) reveals that using pictures in teaching a foreign language should be made according to the following criteria:-

1. Pictures have to be suitable and relate to the subject matter.
2. Clarity of pictures is essential.
3. Pictures should encourage the students to debate issues they raise.
4. The size of the pictures should be suitable for the classroom or the



text-book.

5. The elements in pictures have to be balanced.

In relation to the previous criteria Alkasimi (1980:11) mentions that the picture has to concentrate on the intended subject, e.g. if the teacher wants to teach the word "tail" he must consider how to attract the student's attention to "tail" itself, either by colouring or underlining it. This high-lights the tail in relation to the rest of the animal. A picture of a watch on a wrist could confuse a student. He may not know if the intended object is the watch or the wrist, thus confirming the need for colouring or underlining.

Arab teachers and text-book compilers have to realise that each Arab country has its own traditions, concepts and customs, therefore the pictures have to reflect these cultural aspects, roughly indicating the behavioural meaning behind them. Consequently Arabic text-books should reflect the traditions and customs of other Arab countries. However experience shows that aspects which represent other Arab countries are ignored. In this case the foreign learner would not be familiar with the different shades of Arabic culture which would affect the meaning of, for example, the words for clothes, transportation, the way of sitting or shaking hands, or the different foods etc. It is found that some pictures in

text-books of teaching Arabic as a foreign language in certain Arab countries do not reflect the reality of life in that country. Students see pictures in the text-book but relate them differently to the outside world. Therefore the task of the text-book compiler should be to ensure that pictures give a true reflection of the general Arabic traditions representing all Arab countries.

Technically, there are three stages of reading with pictures which are mentioned by صديقي and صيني (1984:13).

1. The recognition of the picture's content.
2. Determining some detail of the picture.
3. Forming opinions and expressing views about people and objects in the picture.

It has been outlined above that pictures, therefore, play an important role in teaching foreign language skills and that language can be improved and developed through the proper use of them. In the absence of these criteria, the use of pictures in the text-book of teaching a foreign language including Arabic would lead to negative teaching and learning.

### 3. The Tape Recorder

When preparing the text-book for teaching a foreign language one of the most common practices is to produce an accompanying tape of the contents of the text-book. This tape helps the student to understand and master the chosen language as it is spoken by the native speaker because good listening leads to good intonation and verbal skills. This being the case, such tapes are essential in teaching Arabic as a foreign language, the reasons being that Arabic has many different dialects representative of different Arab countries. If modern standard Arabic only was taped different dialects would be ignored. In addition the pronunciation of Arabic sounds differs from person to person depending on his country of origin. Having a tape as a model therefore can minimise these differences and help the student grasp standard Arabic. Moreover a tape recorder is portable and can be listened to in many different places and can be replaced as often as desired. The tapes however have to conform to certain criteria when teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Regarding this طعيمة (1985:318) remarks that the efficient tape is one which pays attention to the fluency of the recorded language in terms of intonation, speed, tone, pauses and style. The language should not be too formal or casual but should relate to normal everyday life situations.

## **THE PLAN AND PRODUCTION OF THE TEXT-BOOK OF TEACHING ARABIC AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

An examination of the great number of text-books of teaching Arabic as a foreign language reveals that the majority of Arab text writers do not pay attention to the planning and production of text-books, which means the book will be sub-standard. Many points should be taken in to consideration when preparing the text-book. These include the average student's personal qualifications and background and the authenticity of material, the range of graded material and the level of standard expected from the book.

Obviously the book for teaching Arabic for special purposes would have different content from that of the general text-book. A book prepared for reading and writing would differ from a book designed for listening, speaking, reading and writing.

As mentioned earlier, it is assumed that the method of teaching Arabic to a foreign student is different from that of teaching Arabic to Arabs. Although there are some similarities between learning one's own language and a foreign language such as practice, repetition and comprehension there are substantial differences which are mentioned by

طعيمة (1985:126-8). The mother tongue is acquired spontaneously and the teacher's role is to improve and develop this, whereas the foreign language is acquired through study. The mother tongue is learnt to satisfy basic needs whereas the foreign language is studied for certain purposes and there may be no great loss if the student fails to master it properly.

The native language has been learnt as part of culture while the foreign language has to be learned along with new cultures. The student may find it difficult to meet and interact with the new systems of that culture. The native language is used all the time and therefore is mastered quickly while the foreign learner has to learn it formally and only for certain periods, which means it takes longer to learn and requires a great deal of effort. The native language learner is not influenced by other languages whereas the foreign learner is invariably affected by his native language. It is clear that the differences between teaching and learning the mother tongue and the foreign language should be taken into account when preparing the text-book for teaching foreign languages. When planning the layout of a text-book for teaching a foreign language, including Arabic, attention has to be paid to the standard of education attained by the student before embarking on learning the foreign language. It is common knowledge that teaching the illiterate person differs greatly from the teaching of a

person who can read or write regardless of his native language. Therefore we find that students have to conform to a certain standard of education before being admitted to institutes to study the foreign language. Regarding this point some teachers believe that the elementary school certificate is the minimum qualification needed, while others believe that the secondary school certificate is necessary. Some institutions require a high school certificate before admitting foreign language students. An example of this is the Arabic Language Institute, Riyadh, Saudi-Arabia. Language teaching programmes usually consist of three levels - the beginner's level, the intermediate level and the advanced level. The beginner's level aims to develop and improve language skills within a certain range (sounds, vocabulary and construction). The intermediate level aims to strengthen language skills and increase the vocabulary of the student while the advanced level represents the highest grade attainable.

To neglect the technical aspects of the text-book is a negative attitude. Many advantages will be gained from producing the highest standard text-book.

The introduction to the text-book should contain details of the contents so that insights regarding the purpose of the book, the time taken to teach it and the techniques available to facilitate the learning process

are explained. The introduction may present general ideas about the foreign language and its relationship with the native language. It is expected that the introduction should have guidelines for both the teacher and the student especially if there is no teacher's guide.

The indexes and glossaries are as valuable as the introduction. There is usually a number of indexes in a text-book, such as subject index, name index, vocabulary index, grammar index, and an index of cultural aspects. Technically such indexes give a concise picture of the linguistic and cultural contents of the book. Page headings are just as important as the other features as they give an idea about the author's philosophical and educational directions to help the new student.

The size of the book, pictures, vocalisation, printing errors and the amount of pages are all matters for consideration. In addition, the presentation and attractiveness of the text-book and the quality of the paper are other factors to be considered when designing or evaluating the text-book. The cover illustrations and attractive presentation would affect the reader's judgment of the book.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **Parameters for evaluating the text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language.**

As part of my research on Arabic language teaching, I have formulated the following questions to serve as parameters in evaluating text-books for teaching Arabic as a foreign language. Your comments on the usefulness and suitability of these questions for text-book examination would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

1. Are the objectives of the book clear in the author's mind?
2. Are these objectives mentioned in the introduction to the book?
3. Are the objectives clear to the reader and their characteristics delimited?



4. Has the book actually fulfilled the aim of the author?
5. Is it possible to measure the objectives conceived?
6. Do these objectives take into consideration the affective and personal factors of the learners?
7. Have the objectives been soundly formulated in the light of the language (linguistic) components and skills and the social situations?
8. Do the sections in the book tally with the level for which the book has been written?
9. What is the nature of the curriculum for which the book has been written?
10. What kind of language has been used in writing the book: Standard, Classical, Dialect, etc.?
11. Is the style of the book clear?
12. What is the approach on which the book has been built?
13. Is this approach clear in the book?
14. Is the gradual introduction of the sections in the book clear and logical?
15. Does the book deal with the language (linguistic) skills according to the system which has been agreed on by the majority of educationalists, i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing?

16. Does the book maintain the balance in presenting the components and language (linguistic) skills?
17. Have the teaching points been introduced in view of the chosen syllabus design?
18. Does the content of the book conform to the learners' needs for this book?
19. Are the contents clear and up-to-date?
20. Have the texts in the book been authenticated and their sources referred to?
21. Does the book take into account the linguistic background of the learners?
22. Does the book use an intermediary language in the teaching process?
23. Is the teaching method which the book adopts clear?
24. Has the arrangement of the material been accomplished by use of logical and well-organised subjects and ideas?
25. Do the illustrations in the book help or hinder the learner's learning process?
26. Does the book contain unnecessary sections?
27. Does the book take the individual differences between the learners into account?

28. To what extent does the book appear to be written for teaching Arabic to non-native speakers?
29. Are the sounds introduced as a separate stage in the book?
30. Does the book introduce, as a first step, the sounds which exist in the learners' language?
31. Are sounds graded according to their difficulty?
32. Have the sounds been distributed equally over the chapters of the book?
33. Have the frequency of the sounds and their recognition been taken account of in the book?
34. Are the sounds which the learners find difficult to learn used in structures?
35. Are all the texts in the book vocalised?
36. Do the vowels appear on all the letters in the word, or do they appear on the last letters only?
37. Does the book use transliteration in teaching the sounds?
38. Is the teaching of sounds accompanied by written symbols?
39. Is the teaching of sounds accompanied by illustrative pictures?
40. Do these pictures help the learners to understand the sounds?
41. Are linguistic phenomena like "nunation" and "tashdid" introduced in the initial stages of the book?

42. Is the number of words in each single lesson suitable for the learners?
43. Does the overall number of words in the book conform to the educational principles concerning the introduction of words in the school textbook?
44. Are new and old words introduced in a suitable manner?
45. Are the words sufficiently repeated?
46. Have the new words been introduced in previously studied sentences?
47. Does the book take into consideration the quality of the words, e.g. concrete or abstract words, functional words, content words, etc.?
48. Does it take "derivation", "synonymy" and "opposition" into account when presenting the words in the school book?
49. Has the gradation from the difficult to the easy, and from the simple to the complex, been observed in introducing the words?
50. Has the book avoided introducing long words at the beginning?
51. Has the book refrained from introducing words containing difficult sounds in its early stages?
52. Does the book present meaningless words?
53. Do some lessons introduce more, or fewer, words than is necessary?
54. Are the subjects in the book introduced in the form of dialogues, or in the form of informative texts?

55. Are the dialogues natural or artificial?
56. Are contemporary or old (classical) expressions used in the dialogues?
57. Are colloquial expressions introduced into the dialogue?
58. Does the dialogue cover the suggested subjects efficiently?
59. Does the dialogue suit the learners' ages and their intellectual development?
60. Is the dialogue introduced in one lesson, or in consecutive lessons?
61. Is the cultured dimension presented in a logical and reasonable manner?
62. Does the author favour the Arabic and Islamic cultures?
63. Does the book present the Arabic and Islamic notions in a balanced way?
64. Are the Arabic and Islamic cultures presented in general terms, or has the author restricted himself to presenting the culture of the country in which the book has been written?
65. Does the book introduce old-fashioned and trivial cultural patterns?
66. Has the culture been introduced directly or indirectly?
67. Does the author utilise the teaching of culture to introduce the words and structures which lead to better education?
68. Are the Arabic and Islamic cultures introduced in an organised, gradual

fashion?

69. To what extent does the book use Modern Standard Arabic in presenting the Arabic culture?
70. Is it evident that the book adopts specific political and religious attitudes and orientations?
71. Does the book introduce the Arabic culture of the past and the present?
72. Does the book offer pictures of the development and progress in the Arab countries?
73. Does the book provide specimens from the culture of other nations?
74. What impression does the book leave in the reader's mind about the Islamic-Arabic culture?
75. Does the book correct some of the erroneous concepts about the Islamic-Arabic culture?
76. Are syntactic structures introduced in the first lessons of the book?
77. When does the book start using syntactic terminologies like: subject, object, adjective, genitive, etc.?
78. Is the syntax presented functionally?
79. Are the syntactic rules introduced first and then followed by the examples, or vice versa?
80. Is there a clear plan concerning the gradual introduction of syntactic

sections?

81. Are the syntactic structures employed in the subsequent lessons in an organised and pedagogically logical manner?
82. Is there a clear classificatory plan for introducing syntactic structures, e.g. presenting the nominatives first, then the accusative, and lastly the genitives?
83. Are grammatical phenomena, such as "personal pronouns" and "demonstrative pronouns", introduced in an intensive way in the same lesson?
84. Is the number of syntactic structures in a single lesson suitable for the lesson - time and the learners' level?
85. Are the syntactic rules presented in a deliberate and direct manner, or in an indirect way through the deduction of the rule from the given examples?
86. Does the presentation of the syntactic rules move gradually from the easy to the difficult, and from the simple to the complicated?
87. Do excessive and unnecessary explanatory notes accompany the introduction of syntactic rules?
88. Is parsing introduced in the school book?
89. Is it (i.e. parsing) introduced in an intensive and boring manner?

90. To what extent do language-drills vary in the book?
91. Do the drills treat language (linguistic) skills in a balanced manner?
92. Do the drills concentrate on the major ideas mentioned in the principal texts?
93. Is there a feeling that the ultimate aim of the drills is to achieve contact between the learners of Arabic and the native speakers of the language?
94. Could the drills be applied in actual situations when dealing with people outside the school, e.g. in the market, at the railway station, at the airport, etc.?
95. Do the drills cover the items which occur in the original texts of the book?
96. Is the language of the drills obvious and understandable?
97. Do dialectal or local vernacular words appear in the drills?
98. Are the drills introduced through diversified written exercises?
99. Is there a special emphasis on a specific language skill?
100. Are the pictures in the book obvious and suitable for the learners' mental abilities?
101. Do the pictures help in reducing the additional explanations which the teacher provides?



102. Do the pictures fulfil their aim in the book?
103. Are the pictures used to present all linguistic ingredients, e.g. sounds, words, structures, culture, etc.?
104. Does the book contain the necessary appendices and indexes?
105. Are there printing errors in the book?
106. Are the internal headings (titles) ostensible?
107. Is the size of the book appropriate for the learners to handle?
108. Do you feel satisfied when handling the book?

# TABLES

TABLE 1  
Illustrate The Number Of Words In The  
Text-Book "Arabic For Beginners " Volume 1

Units	parts							
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c	Total
1	-	14	15	20	31	28	-	108
2	-	15	20	28	27	24	-	114
3	-	15	20	29	16	27	-	107
4	-	15	22	26	30	23	-	116
5	-	23	22	34	23	26	-	128
6	-	28	37	38	33	23	28	186
Total	-	110	136	175	160	151	28	760
%	-	14.0	18.0	23.0	21.0	20.0	4.0	100

**TABLE 2**  
**Illustrate The New And The Old Words In**  
**The Text-Book "Arabic For Beginners" Volume I**

Units	parts							
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c	Total
1 N*	-	14	10	15	18	17	-	74
1 O*	-	-	5	5	13	11	-	34
2 N	-	13	15	20	12	17	-	77
2 O	-	2	5	8	15	7	-	37
3 N	-	12	13	17	8	13	-	63
3 O	-	3	7	12	8	14	-	44
4 N	-	11	12	17	19	7	-	66
4 O	-	4	10	9	11	16	-	50
5 N	-	16	13	18	8	14	-	69
5 O	-	7	9	16	15	12	-	59
6 N	-	13	25	21	16	11	11	97
6 O	-	15	12	17	17	12	17	90
Total N	-	79	88	108	81	79	11	446
Total O	-	31	48	67	79	72	17	314

**N = New Words      O = Old Words**

**TABLE 3**  
**Illustrate The Function And Content Words In**  
**The Text-Book "Arabic For Beginners " Volume 1**

Units	parts							
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c	Total
1 C*	-	10	10	17	24	20	-	81
F*	-	4	5	3	7	8	-	27
2 C	-	11	14	19	21	17	-	82
F	-	4	6	9	6	7	-	32
3 C	-	12	15	23	13	20	-	83
F	-	3	5	6	3	7	-	24
4 C	-	11	16	22	23	18	-	83
F	-	4	6	4	7	5	-	26
5 C	-	16	15	22	18	20	-	91
F	-	7	7	12	5	6	-	37
6 C	-	22	30	32	29	19	25	157
F	-	6	7	6	4	4	3	30
Total C	-	82	100	135	128	114	25	584
F	-	28	36	40	32	37	3	176
Total	-	110	136	175	160	151	28	760

**C = Content      F = Function**

**TABLE 4**  
**Illustrate The Concrete And Abstract Words**  
**In Text-Book "Arabic For Beginners" Volume I**

Units	parts						
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c
1	c Oral-	2	5	5	7	6	-
	a Stages	2	-	2	4	3	-
2	c Oral-	1	4	9	5	5	-
	a Stages	2	3	3	5	2	-
3	c Oral-	4	2	7	6	9	-
	a Stages	2	3	4	2	1	-
4	c Oral-	1	5	4	5	3	-
	a Stages	1	4	4	3	3	-
5	c Oral-	6	3	7	7	12	-
	a Stages	3	2	4	3	3	-
6	c Oral-	2	7	7	9	12	15
	a Stages	5	6	4	5	4	3

**TABLE 5**  
**Illustrate The Compound Words In**  
**The Text-book "Arabic for Beginners " Volume 1**

Units	parts						
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c
1	-	2	1	-	3	1	-
2	-	-	2	2	2	2	-
3	-	-	-	2	1	-	-
4	-	-	2	1	1	1	-
5	-	2	-	-	4	5	-
6	-	2	2	2	3	5	1
Total	-	6	7	7	14	19	1

**TABLE 6**  
**Illustrate The Antonymous Words In the**  
**Text-Book "Arabic For Beginners " Volume 1**

Units	parts						
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c
1	-	-	-	1	-	1	-
2	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
3	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
4	-	1	1	1	-	-	-
5	-	2	1	-	-	1	-
6	-	-	-	2	2	-	1

TABLE 7

Illustrate The Derivation Words In  
The Text-Book "Arab For Beginners " Volume 1

Units	Parts						
	1	2	3	4	5a	5b	5c
1	-	-	-	2	-	4	-
2	-	-	3	4	3	2	-
3	-	1	2	5	4	1	-
4	-	-	3	2	2	2	-
5	-	-	4	4	3	2	-
6	-	2	7	3	4	3	2



**TABLE 8**  
**Illustrate The Circulation Of Words In The**  
**Text-Book "Arabic For Beginners" Volume 1**

Notation	Circulation				Total	%
	1	2	3-4	5-		
Content Words	293	93	8	6	400	90
Function Words	15	12	5	14	46	10
Total	309	105	13	20	446	100
%	69	24	3	4	100	100

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